

THE JOURNAL OF BIBLE AND RELIGION

PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
BIBLICAL INSTRUCTORS TO FOSTER
RELIGION IN EDUCATION

Vol. IX

February, 1941

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Published in February, May, August and November by the National Association of Biblical Instructors. Publication Office, 36 East Main Street, Somerville, New Jersey. Editorial Office, Beloit College, Beloit, Wisconsin. The subscription price is 3.00 per annum. Single copies, 75 cents. Entered as second-class matter February 14, 1939, at the post office at Somerville, New Jersey, under the Act of August 24, 1912.

Published by
FEB 7 1942

THE JOURNAL OF BIBLE AND RELIGION

VOLUME IX

FEBRUARY · 1941

PART 1

The Dramatic Instinct of Early Christianity*

B. HARVIE BRANSCOMB

FORM criticism has taught us to observe in the gospels the influence of the living problems and issues of the Christian movement. It has necessarily stressed particular needs or situations, such as the necessity of placating the Roman government, or the needs of the traveling Christian missionaries, or the constant opposition of the Jewish leaders. This emphasis on particular elements in the Christian "life situation" tends to create an impression of contingency or accident in the preservation of gospel materials, and, even more strongly, of the variety and diversity of the influences and forces which affected the gospels. The existence of any unity underlying the diversities of belief and practice and itself influencing the gospel traditions has been obscured. And yet it can scarcely be doubted that there was such a unity, a spirit or ethos which was characteristic of the main stream of the Christian movement. Such an ethos, if its existence be granted, would certainly have affected the gospel tradition. And yet, since that which is external and specific is easier to grasp and to describe than that which is underlying and general it is probably true to say that we know more about the features of early Christianity than of its nature. As teachers of religion our ultimate interest must be the latter. I suggest therefore that we might profitably have, in addition to the study of

the particular influences in early Christianity which form criticism has listed, some attention to the more general and constant characteristics of early Christianity which also have affected the formation of the gospels.

It is not my purpose to attempt any list of such basic characteristics nor to endeavor to define the Christian ethos. I wish merely to name one such characteristic or aspect of the Christian movement which appears to have affected the tradition to a notable degree. This will illustrate the thesis which I have stated and will itself, I hope, have some value for the understanding of early Christianity.

Several years ago when working through the *Gospel of Mark* I was struck by the many points where the tradition seemed to have been affected by a desire to heighten the dramatic character of the account. Sometimes this operated in conjunction with other interests, sometimes it seemed the only motive to which the facts could be attributed. That the quality of drama was inherent in the original incidents of the life of Jesus is of course obvious. The point which interested me was that the Christian communities moulded and developed the tradition in such a way as to sharpen and bring this out to the fullest degree. If one takes the gospel story as a whole the effect of this tendency is too evident to be ignored. May I remind you of a few familiar facts:

*The presidential address delivered at the thirty-first annual meeting of the National Association of Biblical Instructors at Union Theological Seminary, New York City, December 27 and 28, 1940.

(1) It has often been pointed out that the story of the Passion dominates all four Gospels. Twenty per cent of the Gospel of Mark is devoted to the events of the last two days. The Passion overshadows and is the primary interest of the narrative from the scene at Caesarea Philippi until the end. This by measurement is one half of the gospel. When one recalls the use to which the episodes and sayings from Jesus' career might have been put in the practical activities of the church, one cannot fail to realize that a general interest or point of view has dominated lesser and more particular interests.

A foreshortening of the events of Jesus' life has taken place because of the emphasis on the final events. This last had a theological interest, to be sure. But before the theology there was a concern with the event. I think it would not be so true to say that a theological concept has so radically modified the tradition, as to say that something in the Christian spirit deeper than theology brought and kept to the fore the dramatic climax to Jesus' life which thus became the subject of theological reflection.

(2) It is also a familiar fact that throughout its course the narrative of the ministry of Jesus is deeply marked by the consciousness of the conflict between the Saviour and the forces of evil. Before Jesus begins his work the devil endeavors to destroy him by three temptations in the wilderness. As soon as the narrative of the call of the four disciples is out of the way Mark describes a conflict with an evil spirit. "I know who you are," the demon cries out, "The Holy One of God! You have come to destroy us" (1²⁴). Repeatedly this element recurs. It is now generally recognized to be a primary motif of the gospel. The powers of evil know him, and he recognizes them to be his adversaries. Satan is his great antagonist. It is his "house" which Jesus is "spoiling" (Mk 3²⁷). But the demons are

not his only adversaries; he is also opposed by evil men. They deny his right to forgive sins, criticise him for eating with publicans and sinners, charge him with violations of the divine law because he did not obey their rules, and when on the Sabbath day he did a good deed against their law went out and "took counsel against him how they might destroy him" (Mk 3⁶). This resolution, recorded virtually at the beginning of the gospel, is never modified or weakened. It remains as the background for the whole account. Thus the narrative of the career of Jesus is that of God's representative against whom men and demons conspired. The tradition which has been preserved is one of conflict between the divine goodness and salvation and the forces of evil. The conception is strongly held and deeply etched in the Christian consciousness. Later additions to the tradition reflect it markedly. When Matthew tells how Herod, the embodiment of cruelty, endeavored with all the power of his throne to destroy the infant cradled in a manger at whose birth the very angels rejoiced, one can see again the dramatic instinct at work.

(3) A number of specific incidents in the gospels, or at least the attention devoted to them, can be shown to be due to this desire to accentuate the dramatic character of the tradition. In illustrating this I shall confine myself to the account of the Passion.

(a) The concern with the betrayal by Judas would seem to be a clear instance of this sort. Plath, in an article in the *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, has attempted to explain why the early Christians regarded the accounts of Judas' betrayal as worth preserving.¹ His explanations are unsatisfactory. No doubt the betrayal was a fact, but why did the tradition preserve and emphasize it as it does? There is the statement of the agreement of Judas to betray Jesus, the latter's prophecy of it at the supper, the account of the betrayal in the garden, and finally in Matthew

¹Vol. 17, pp. 178ff.

and in the Acts the story of the end of Judas. No doubt one or more details could be regarded as fulfillment of Scripture—the thirty pieces of silver, for example—but only in the most general way could this be claimed for the episode as a whole. The simplest explanation is that this concern with the treachery of Judas is merely part of the dramatic coloration of the narrative. The Lord had not only faced the hatred of the evil leaders of the nation but the basest treachery of one from whom he would have expected loyalty and love. Similar in character are also the many references to the weakness and desertion of the other disciples, though here of course we must recognize the influence also of the moralizing element, "Watch and pray lest you also enter into temptation." The disciples fell asleep in the garden, fled when the arresting band arrived, one of their leaders denied him with cursing, and, at the last, the representative and exponent of divine love and mercy was left alone in the hands of his destroyers. In all of this the desire to sharpen the contrasts and to bring out the depth of the conflict is to be plainly seen.

(b) Closely related to the above and finding its explanation in this same dramatic sense are the various details recording the ignominy and shame to which Jesus, the Messiah and Son of God, was subjected. What was the purpose in preserving so fully the accounts of the beating at the hands of the high priests' servants and Roman soldiers, the mocking of the prophet, the purple robe and the crown of thorns? These are merely overtones to the central tragedy. They were not needed for any theological purpose but only to reveal to the reader the extent of the Master's degradation and shame. The same play upon contrast is seen in the story that he was executed with two robbers, who, according to the earliest tradition, reviled him. Clearest of this

series is the Barabbas story. A criminal is released and Jesus sent to his death. It is probable that in the original version the contrast was even more emphatic than in our accounts. Barabbas seems also to have been named Jesus.² Jesus Barabbas was released, and Jesus the Saviour sent to crucifixion.

(c) A great number of interests combine in the various testimonies to the innocence of Jesus. From the standpoint of this paper these are worth noting. The false witnesses do not agree. Pilate perceived that "for envy the chief priests had delivered him up" (Mk 15¹⁰). Pilate's wife sends at the last moment, the very moment when the sentence was to be pronounced, her dramatic warning, "Have nothing to do with that righteous man" (Mt 27¹⁹). In Luke one of the robbers testifies to his innocence. In all the accounts the death is followed by the centurion's solemn pronouncement, "Truly this man was Son of God" (Mk 15³⁹). These notes, unnecessary in the light of all that had gone before, keep the attention constantly directed to the innocence of Jesus and the malevolent character of the opposition to him.

(d) Such tragedy and crime draw even from nature evidences of sympathetic understanding. Darkness is upon the face of the earth for three hours. Matthew substitutes an earthquake which rends rocks and opens tombs. It is no longer maintained by any scholar that these statements had any historical basis. They are the cosmic theatrical effects, evidences that nature could not remain indifferent at the apparent victory of such darkness and evil.

(e) I think that I should say a word on the subject of the fulfillments of Scripture which the Christians found in so many of the episodes of the Passion. The point of significance about such fulfillments was that this correspondence of event and the text of ancient, inspired Scripture showed that the events happened not by accident or weak-

²See my commentary, *The Gospel of Mark*, p. 289.

ness but by divine purpose. The Passion was thus attributed to divine necessity. This was the primary explanation of the fact that the Christ was deserted, betrayed, and put to death. "How is it written of the Son of Man that he must suffer many things and be put at nought" (Mk. 9¹²)? "The Son of Man goeth even as it is written of him" (Mk 14²¹). "Not what I will but what Thou dost will" (Mk 14³⁶). "Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and so enter into his glory" (Lk. 24⁶)? Such expressions could be multiplied. This conception of divine necessity lifts the action from the twisted area of human choice and contingency to the level of redeeming purpose. In Greek tragedy it is fate which determines and compels the action, in the Christian drama the will of God. Thus the dramatic intensity is not diffused by questions of method and means, but focused on the final outcome.

In all of this the conception of the Passion is that of the apparent complete victory of evil. It could not be better described than in the words which in Luke Jesus addresses to those who came out to seize him, "This is your hour and the power of darkness" (Lk 22⁵³).

(4) It would be incomplete to omit any reference to the dramatization of the joyous finale with which the gospels end. Nature cooperates in the achievement of the victory: an earthquake rolls away the stone (Mt 28² Mk 16⁴). An angel—or two angels—come down from heaven to make the joyous announcement. The risen Lord appears to his disciples with irrefutable proofs of his conquest of death. He announces that "all authority" has been given to him (Mt 28¹⁸), and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed to all nations in his name (Lk 24⁴⁷). In Matthew the conclusion is the Great Commission, in Luke the account of the ascension to heaven.

It is needless to continue these familiar illustrations. As the gospel story expanded, this dramatic factor is very clearly to be seen at work. The birth narratives are filled with the wonder and the contrast of the Savior of the world born in a manger. Christian thought carried this dramatic contrast into the area of mythology. Christ, the Son of God, who since the foundation of the world had been at God's right hand, thought that equality with God was not to be snatched at, but humbled himself, descended into the world of sin and death and, having conquered these ancient enemies, ascended once again to the heavenly region (Phil. 2⁵). The myth making, however, was kept in check, as Dibelius has pointed out, by the historical tradition. There are no myths which tell how the Son of God descended to earth, nor, likewise, how he was revived.³ The dramatic instincts were expressed chiefly through the medium of the historical account. As Dibelius puts it, we have Christian legend, but no fully developed Christian myth.

What is the significance of these data? Before answering this question three explanations which occur readily to the mind should be put aside. The first is merely that the drama was actually present in the original events. The inadequacy of this explanation will be apparent, I believe, to all who have followed the researches of the last three decades. All history is an interpretation, if only by the omission of data which appear irrelevant. The church preserved the picture in this form. Not only so, but, as has been indicated, they heightened and intensified the contrasts, and conceived the story in terms of a single and decisive issue of cosmic character. The second explanation to which the mind turns is that the Christian movement was a popular one, and that oral traditions of a popular character have always produced folklore in highly dramatic terms. One thinks of the Norse tales, for example, or the legends of King

³Dibelius, *From Tradition to Gospel*, p. 269f.

Arthur and his Round Table. To this I would reply, first, that too much has been made of the popular character of early Christianity. The following was from the masses, no doubt, but it seems very questionable if the leadership was. Certainly what we know of Paul, Apollos, the authors of the Fourth Gospel and the Epistle to the Hebrews, Justin and others does not suggest this. In the second place, and more important, the Christian tradition developed within a period of a few decades instead of the centuries that much folk literature has required for its formation. Apparently we must seek for some explanation of the strength of this factor in the Christian movement.

This last supplies the answer also to a third ready explanation—that the development described is to be attributed to the influence of the various "salvation cults" of the Hellenistic world. The extent and character of this influence is, of course, one of the major problems of New Testament study and is not a theme which can be discussed with any adequacy at this point. For the purpose of this paper, however, it need only be said that, whatever this relationship may have been, the development of the gospel story along the dramatic lines which have been sketched was a thoroughly indigenous or instinctive Christian movement, and that the Christian drama exceeded its Hellenistic counterparts not only in the rapidity with which it was developed but also in the definiteness and the elaboration of its detail. We are warranted therefore in seeking for some explanation of the strength of this factor in the Christian consciousness, even if it should be merely for the vigor with which it may have been appropriated.

I suggest that the explanation lies in the nature of drama as an interpretation of life and in the particular view of life which was basic in the Christian conception.

Drama, in the broad sense, is a composition or set of events having unity and

progress, and leading up to a catastrophe or consummation. That is to say that drama is based on a conflict which, as the dramatic action develops, is revealed in happy or tragic terms. It is evident, therefore, why religion has so frequently developed its message in terms of a sacred drama. For religion is in its essence dramatic. Science and philosophy deal with what man may know. These disciplines may be calm and detached, for they are descriptive in nature. Religion deals with what man must do. It has a number of sources but it arises in large part from the choices of action which life presents. We may not put these aside. The alternatives between which we must choose involve questions of ultimate reality which go beyond the bounds of objective knowledge. In this area we must walk, in part at least, by faith. Be that as it may, we must choose. Life is filled with inner conflict. Selfish and altruistic impulses find themselves in conflict, desire is faced with a demand for sacrifice. Religion emphasizes this choice, focuses attention upon it, believes that man will be saved if he turns from the evil to the good. The religious view of life is, in other words, dramatic. There are two ways, but man may walk only one of them, two masters, but he cannot serve both. Within the conflict man must find his salvation. It is obvious that abstract statements of theological belief fail to convey the ethos of an ethical religion. The passage in Ephesians, though not exhaustive of the Christian message, is expressive of its temper:

"For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Wherefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand in the evil day" (6^{12f}).

Early Christianity was an intensely ethical religion and tended naturally to view

its central story in terms of a dramatic conflict between goodness and evil. But it is important to note the particular character of this Christian drama, and its outcome. Here a comparison with another great dramatic tradition will be instructive.

Greek drama, it is generally agreed, arose from the ritual connected with the cults of Dionysus. The early pattern, many features of which Gilbert Murray has shown clung to the tragedies even in their most developed form, involved the following stages: (1) A contest or struggle. (2) A ritual or sacrificial death of the God. Attis and Adonis were slain by the tabu animal, Dionysus, Osiris, and Orpheus were torn to pieces. (3) A messenger announcing the death of the God. In some forms the dead body was brought in on a bier. (4) The lamentation over the god. (5) The discovery of the slain and mutilated God, followed by his resurrection or apotheosis.⁴ The basis or origin of this ritual was a nature myth. The contest or struggle is the year against its enemy, light against darkness, summer against winter. The death of the god represents the dying year over which the worshippers weep; his resurrection, its return in the glory of spring.⁵ This first stage of Greek tragedy was thus a dramatization of the conflict in nature, the eternal struggle between sun and frost, light and darkness. This struggle is dramatic, but the outlook, in contrast to the Christian sense of drama, is objective instead of subjective. The Greek and the Hebrew spirit always differed in this respect, that the former always retained a great concern for the natural environment of man, while such questions have always been secondary or neglected in the Hebrew and Christian tradition.

Greek drama developed along two lines. On the one hand, with the development of Greek culture and thought new meanings

were poured into the older forms. The drama was affected by the Greek epic, by hero cults and other influences. The vessels of the ancient religion were filled and broken by the new wine of a free and reasoning society. In the hands of the great playwrights problems of personal destiny and inner integrity became also the subjects of this ancient vehicle of thought. It is dangerous to generalize about the developed Greek drama, since neither its themes nor its conclusions were uniform. The tragedies of the great period, however, move within the limits of certain fundamental convictions—that there exists a moral order which is inexorable and cannot be defied, that one's character is one's fate, and that within man's nature are impulses which make him the instrument of forces which are too vast and mysterious for him to understand. These tragedies are penetrating analyses of the struggle of life, but they contain no message of salvation. The conflict between light and darkness in the older nature myth has become in part a moral conflict. Man struggles with his own impulses, with fate and with the gods. In a sense it could be said that the center of interest is the same as in the earlier nature myths, man's environment, only this has been broadened to include the social and supernatural forces as well as those which affect man from within. Greek drama analyzed. It portrayed the human conflict, and described its consequences in tragic terms.

In contrast to the public drama was another development which took place in secrecy. I refer to the transformation of the earlier nature cults into cults of personal regeneration, and the enactment of the sacred drama before the eyes of initiates. We do not know too much about these ceremonies but the fact of their enactment seems to be assured. Gilbert Murray has referred to the spirit which fostered these cults as a "failure of nerve." Be that as it may, the sacred story which formed the basis of the cult and its enactment repre-

⁴See his "Excursus on the Ritual Forms Preserved in Greek Tragedy" in Jane Harrison, *Themis*, pp. 341ff.

⁵Farnell, *Cults of the Greek States*, Vol. 5, Ch. 5.

sented a drama of salvation. Through the initiatory rites the individual became united to the god and thus could hope for immortality. But a decided difference from the Christian story is here to be observed. The salvation offered by Osiris and Orpheus was essentially one of being or nature; the mortal took within himself divinity. Whereas the Christian drama was centered in an ethical conflict, the Greek and Oriental cults, while not completely ignoring ethics, found their center of interest in the change of nature of the individual.

Thus it may be said that the Greek dramatic tradition began with the eternally recurrent conflict in nature and developed along two lines. The sacred stories and enactments of the secret cults were concerned with the contrast between man's mortality and life of a different order which would be immutable and eternal. The developed public dramas rested on the conflict of man's desires and passions and the physical and moral order which the gods and fate enforce. While the moral interest was deep, it never reached a message of salvation. The plays end in tragedy; prideful or sinful men break themselves on the inexorable pattern of moral law and divine power. The subject matter is thus in part identical with that of the Christian drama, but the mood remains one of analysis or description of the springs of human action and its consequences in a world like this one. Christianity, on the other hand was concerned with the moral issues which men must face, and it offered a salvation from sin and its corollary death which was available to men of faith and good will. Its dramatic story is of apparent defeat but ultimate victory, of a Christ whose saving work carried out the purposes of a God of love. To all men everywhere an ethical salvation was now freely offered in his name. Thus the Christian sacred story was not a tragedy but a gospel.

Both the Greek tradition and the Christian viewed life in dramatic terms, but the essence of the one, even at its highest, could be described in the Socratic formula, "Know thyself," that is, if one be permitted the addition of the phrase "and thy universe," while the essence of the other was to will the good. It is not surprising that the Greek spirit is the father of western science, while Christianity, absorbed as it has always been with the essential moral problem, has rarely achieved a vital concern with science and man's environment.

The Christian ethos was thus a dramatic reading of life in terms of its moral possibilities. The effectiveness of this gospel was not due to its rational justification of its claims and affirmations, but rather to a vivid presentation of the latter, combined with the readiness of the Hellenistic world for some such message. "O foolish Galatians," wrote Paul. "... who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ has been depicted nailed to a cross" (Gal. 3¹)? It is interesting to note that Bishop Aulén in his recent study of the doctrine of the Atonement has called the classical view, the view, that is, that is presented in the New Testament and the patristic writings of the first thousand years of church history as "the dramatic view."⁶

Whatever may be the value of this comparison with Greek tragedy, I think the contention can be maintained that a desire to dramatize the ethical conflict which the church saw concentrated in Jesus' brief career has influenced the form of our gospel tradition. That desire came not from some accidental factor but from the deepest conviction of the Christian spirit. It was that thesis which I set out to illustrate. The form critics have done a great service in demonstrating the variety of influences which affected the gospel tradition. But among those influences and at times overwhelming them was a kind of life or spirit—at the center of which were certain moral convictions—which imposed itself inevitably on the historical tradition.

⁶Aulén, *Christus Victor*, p. 20. I am grateful to my colleague Professor Albert Outler for calling this discussion to my attention.

Syncretism in the Old Testament

MILLAR BURROWS

SYNCRETISM begins so early in the Old Testament and plays such an important part from beginning to end that one is tempted to say, in the classic words of Mr. Florian Slappey, "Dat's de only thing dere aint nothin' else but." Such a statement of the case would of course be exaggerated, but Hebrew religion was already a syncretistic product when it first appeared on the stage of history. Before that it had doubtless gone through several stages of syncretism, which now we can only conjecture with more or less probability.

The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob probably combines at least three originally separate gods, the tribal deities of groups represented by the three patriarchs. When these groups were united, their gods were identified. According to Albrecht Alt's theory of "the God of the fathers,"¹ these gods belonged to a type of religion in which a tribal deity was believed to have revealed himself to an ancestor of the group, and was therefore known simply as the god of that ancestor. He had no proper name, Alt thinks, though he might have a distinctive epithet—the Shield of Abraham, the Dread (or Kinsman²) of Isaac, or the Mighty One of Jacob. This part of the theory is not well founded. As Julius Lewy has shown, the God of Abraham was probably El Shaddai.³ Alt's main contention, however, is as well established as anything of the sort can be.

El Shaddai himself was doubtless a syncretistic deity. Albright identifies him, as the god of the Hebrew patriarchs, with Hadad, the son of El and of a goddess whose name is uncertain.⁴ What Babylonian, Amorite, or Hurrian factors may have entered into Abraham's conception of his God we do not know. Recognition of the fact that there were undoubtedly many such

factors does not at all prevent us from believing that in a real and significant sense Abraham received a genuine revelation.

The assimilation of El Shaddai and the gods of Isaac and Jacob may have taken place in the land of Canaan. Be that as it may, in Canaan the Hebrews soon came into contact with local deities at such places as Shechem, Bethel, Mamre, and Beersheba. How long these deities maintained a separate existence in the minds of the Hebrews we cannot tell. For some generations the worship of the old tribal deity and that of the local god may have been carried on side by side, but eventually the shrines were appropriated, together with more or less of their ritual and mythology. Apparently the cults at these shrines had already become thoroughly Israelite when they were later taken over again by Yahwism.

Contact with Canaanite civilization exposed the Hebrews indirectly to Egyptian influence. Those who went down into Egypt and lived there were more directly exposed. As shepherds in the land of Goshen they may not have been much affected, and when they were forced to make bricks for the cities of Pithom and Raamses they can hardly have been favorably impressed by Egyptian culture. Some of them, however, like Joseph and Moses, were doubtless more closely associated with the Pharaohs and in a better position to appreciate the better elements of Egyptian life and thought.

The story of Moses and the account of the covenant at Sinai raise the problem of the origin of Yahwism. Whatever view we may take of this, it was certainly a product of syncretism in the general sense in which I am using that term. The familiar Kenite

hypothesis has lately been subjected to renewed criticism, especially by Prof. Meek,⁵ but while it is undemonstrable, I confess that it still seems to me distinctly probable. In any case, whether or not Moses learned from Jethro the worship of Yahweh, his conception of Yahweh unquestionably combined elements from the religion of his Hebrew ancestors with others from his Egyptian environment. The name Yahweh itself, whatever may have been its origin and original significance, probably meant to Moses "(God) causes to be," and the idea thus expressed may well have been suggested to him, as Albright has shown, by the claims made for Egyptian gods by their worshippers.⁶

The final conquest and settlement of Canaan promoted what had already been going on in the time of the patriarchs, but now it was Yahweh, the God of the tribes from the desert, who came into contact and conflict with the Canaanite deities. It may be that for some time Yahweh was worshipped only as the God of the federation of tribes, while each tribe by itself continued to worship also its own ancestral god. It may be that the cults of the local deities of the ancient Palestinian shrines were not much affected at first by the covenant with Yahweh. But Yahweh was by nature a jealous God, who could not lightly tolerate the worship of other deities by his people. He was also a God of righteousness, whose service was incompatible with at least one aspect of Canaanite religion, sacred prostitution.

The conflict was not one of monotheism against polytheism. That the religion of Moses was monotheistic I cannot regard as probable, in spite of Prof. Albright's effort to prove this.⁷ Albright has conclusively demonstrated that Mosaic monotheism was possible. Nevertheless what the evidence of the Old Testament itself clearly indicates, it seems to me, is that the covenant with Yahweh involved, not the denial that there were other gods, but the choice

of Yahweh alone as the God of Israel. That choice, however, was enough to produce conflict when Israel was tempted to worship other deities.

Such a temptation was an inevitable result of the social and cultural transition which followed the conquest of Canaan. While the life of the invading Israelites was not at this time, and perhaps had never been, wholly nomadic, they had not hitherto settled down to a regular agricultural mode of life in permanent villages. Yahweh was not a god of agriculture, and the soil from which the Israelites now had to wrest their living was claimed by other deities, who for centuries had been making it fruitful for their worshippers. Small wonder if Israel was tempted to turn her back on the husband who had espoused her in the wilderness, and to run after other lovers who promised her corn and wine and oil. Small wonder if several centuries had to go by before she was brought to see that it was none of these but Yahweh himself who had been giving her corn, wine, and oil all the time. In learning to farm the soil of Canaan the Israelites learned to worship the gods of the soil. Their exclusive allegiance to Moses' God could only be gained when Yahweh himself became a god of the soil. To keep them from having other gods before him, Yahweh himself had to learn farming along with his people.

In so doing, however, he ran a grave risk of being denatured and becoming only another Baal. The details of the process by which Yahweh finally triumphed over Baal cannot now be recovered. What happened, especially among the northern tribes and later in the northern kingdom, has been variously interpreted. Was the cult of Bethel and Dan a baalized Yahwism, or did Israel repudiate Yahweh and put Baal in his place? Prof. Meek argues for the latter view of the case;⁸ others, with more reason I think, hold that the northern tribes and the kingdom of Israel always considered themselves

worshippers of Yahweh, but in their thought and worship of him more or less consciously assimilated much from Canaanite Baalism. In either case, the God they worshipped was very different from the God of Moses. Living among the Canaanites and gradually absorbing them into their own nation, the people of Israel lost consciousness of the differences between Canaanite religion and their own. The prophets were thus driven to draw the line sharply and call Israel back to the old Mosaic tradition.

Through all this, to be sure, Yahwism was not merely corrupted but also enriched. To have drawn attention to this side of the matter is the merit of Prof. Elmer A. Leslie's book, *Old Testament Religion in the Light of its Canaanite Background* (1936). The details of the picture are not yet clear, in spite of the fact that much attention has been paid in recent decades to the influence of Canaanite ritual, mythology, and eschatology (if any) on Israelite religion.

On one point I must register here dissent from a view which has been put forth recently. With all due allowance for the prominence of dying and rising gods in the fertility cults of the ancient Near East, I can see no evidence, in Hosea or elsewhere, that Israel learned from the Canaanite cult a belief in the resurrection of the dead, or for that matter that the Canaanites ever had such a belief.⁹ In the much later mystery cults the idea of the god's resurrection was carried over to the deliverance of his worshippers from death, but if there is any sound reason to suspect that this was done in the vegetation cults of the Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age, I am not aware of it.

Speaking of Canaanite influence in the Old Testament, we should not ignore the thesis of several eminent American scholars that the Song of Solomon was an ancient Tammuz liturgy.¹⁰ Of this theory I can only say that I am unconvinced, though the evidence adduced is undeniably impressive.

It would hardly be surprising if the literary forms and phraseology of ancient Semitic love songs and those of the hymns used in the vegetation cults were closely related. Perhaps in some such way as that the Song of Solomon has a real though indirect relationship with fertility liturgies.

In view of the central place of the law in the religion of the Old Testament, the relation of Hebrew law to the legal conceptions and standards of neighboring nations is an important phase of our subject. The parallels between the Code of Hammurabi and the Pentateuch have received much discussion. Waterman and Olmstead argue that the Book of the Covenant is substantially a Canaanite law code based on a series of five laws from the Code of Hammurabi, somewhat modified to suit the conditions of life in Canaan, and expanded in such fashion that for each of the Babylonian laws there is a group of ten laws in the Canaanite code.¹¹

The case is complicated by Alt's analysis of the two types of Hebrew law, apodictic and casuistic, and his demonstration that the apodictic laws are on the whole of Israelite origin and the casuistic laws Canaanite.¹² Now both types of law are found already in the Book of the Covenant; its compilation in the definite form demonstrated by Waterman must therefore have been the work of the Israelites after the conquest. The code as a whole, therefore, cannot have been borrowed from the Canaanites.

The most recent treatment of the relation between Hebrew law and the Code of Hammurabi, so far as I am aware, is that of M. David of Leyden,¹³ who denies any influence, direct or indirect, or even common dependence on an earlier source. The similarities, David claims, merely reflected similar situations. To me this seems an extreme anti-diffusionist position. The most probable view of the matter is that we have in Hebrew law not an adaptation of any particular foreign code, but rather assimilation

of the general legal tradition which prevailed throughout western Asia in the second millennium B. C., and which is reflected by the Middle Assyrian and Hittite laws as well as the Code of Hammurabi. In part this widespread tradition was doubtless absorbed by the ancestors of the Hebrews before they migrated to Canaan. Striking parallels between Mesopotamian (more specifically Nuzian) customs and legal standards and those reflected in Genesis confirm this supposition. For the most part, however, Israel's acquaintance with the legal traditions of western Asia was probably mediated by the Canaanites. This would explain the resemblance between Babylonian laws and the casuistic, Canaanite laws of the Pentateuch.

In this situation of reaction and interaction between Hebrew and Canaanite religion are to be found the beginnings of Old Testament prophecy. Ecstatic manifestations, of a type derived ultimately from Anatolia in all probability, were certainly known among the Canaanites, and it has commonly been supposed that the Israelites learned from them this type of religious expression. The early "sons of the prophets," however, seem to have been zealous champions of Yahwism. Albright holds that even their religious experience and its expression differed essentially from the orgiastic ecstaticism of the prophets of Baal, and he suggests that the Yahwistic movement may have been not so much an imitation of Canaanite prophecy as a reaction against it.¹⁴ In any case Israelite prophecy is a syncretistic phenomenon. To understand it we must recognize both this fact and the certainly no less important fact of its distinctive character and profound originality.

Under the early monarchy, with its strong assertion of national unity and independence, there appears to have been at first relatively little syncretism. David's conquests exalted the prestige of Yahweh over other gods and reduced the temptation to

put others beside him or combine them with him. Under Solomon the matter was quite different. His political alliances and international marriages opened the door to religious influence from many quarters, and we are told that he built shrines for several foreign deities (1 Kings 11). How much effect all this had on the religion of the people is questionable. The new temple of Yahweh, however, was built by Phoenicians, and its decoration embodied Phoenician symbolism.

The division of the kingdom and the establishment of Bethel and Dan as the royal shrines of the northern kingdom promoted religious diversity. The baalization of Yahwism, while checked in Judah by the prestige of the temple, seems to have proceeded apace in Israel. This is shown by the protests of the prophets, especially Hosea. When Ahab married a Phoenician princess, a new rival to Yahweh was introduced, for Jezebel, unlike Solomon's foreign wives, was not content to worship her father's god by herself but attempted to make him the god of her husband's realm. In this case, however, there seems to have been little if any syncretism: the issue was too clear to allow anything but a fight to the death.

During the subsequent history of the kings of Israel and Judah religious influences from farther afield were felt. The most notable feature of this development was the close correlation between political and religious relations. Kings like Ahaz and Manasseh, who were subservient to Assyria, were also hospitable to foreign religious practices. Ahaz copied the altar he saw at Damascus when he went there to meet Tiglath Pileser (2 Kings 16); Manasseh not only "reared up altars for Baal and made an Asherah" but also "worshipped all the host of heaven" and "made Judah also to sin with his idols" (2 Kings 21). Kings like Hezekiah and Josiah, on the other hand, were both independent in international relations and reformers in religion.

Just where we should draw the line in all this between consciously distinct and separate cults and the admission of foreign elements to the religion of Yahweh is hard to tell. Doubtless the average Israelite himself would have found it difficult. The worship of the queen of heaven attested by Jeremiah may be taken as an example of deliberate apostasy from Yahwism (Jer. 7:8; 44:17). When we find alien practices taken up into the cultus of the temple itself, we are more inclined to speak of syncretism. The reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah (2 Kings 18, 23) show that there was a great deal of this. Our distinction between apostasy and syncretism is more difficult to observe with regard to the abominations seen in Ezekiel's vision of what was going on in the temple (Ezek. 8). At any rate it seems that in all these cases later reforms removed practically every trace of the foreign influence.

An extremely important example of syncretism, if it could be established, would be the annual enthronement of Yahweh at the New Year's festival, as postulated by Mowinckel¹⁵ and others. It would explain the original purpose and meaning of many of the Psalms and other passages in the Old Testament and would help us to understand the origins and development of biblical eschatology. The case for this theory has been worked out with great erudition and ingenuity, but unfortunately the positive evidence is extremely slight. While there is much to be learned from Mowinckel's exposition and defense of his theory, it remains at most an interesting possibility.¹⁶

Babylonian influence during the exile no longer appears to have been so extensive as was formerly supposed. At present the tendency of Old Testament scholarship is either to deny that this or that item is due to Babylonian influence at all (as in the case of the Sabbath), or to look for earlier contacts to explain the influence (as in the case of the creation and flood stories). On the

whole the exiles in Babylon seem to have been rather conservative, and to have jealously guarded the spiritual heritage. Those who took a more hospitable attitude toward Babylonian religion were doubtless assimilated and lost to Judaism altogether.

In Palestine, meanwhile, the people who remained, or who crept back from other countries in which they had taken refuge, seem to have fallen prey to the old tendencies toward syncretism or apostasy, which were now relatively free of restraint by loyal priests or prophets of Yahweh. Such a passage as Isaiah 65:1-12 indicates that the people of Palestine in the early part of the Persian period were at the same time calling on Yahweh and indulging in many pagan practices.

Meanwhile, on quite a different level and in quite a different way, another type of foreign influence had been making itself felt in the religion of the Old Testament. Wisdom Literature of the type exemplified in particular by the book of Proverbs is now known to have been popular among other peoples as well as in Israel. While the book of Proverbs was doubtless put into its final form at a late date, much of the material in it was probably very old. Wisdom Literature from Egypt and Babylonia is now known, and it shows that this type of thought and writing was international. Whether Proverbs 22:17-23:11 is directly dependent on the Teaching of Amen-em-ope is still not certain,¹⁷ but that there is some relationship between them is obvious, and at the least it illustrates the international character of the Wisdom Literature.

Numerous parallels between the Old Testament and Phoenician-Canaanite literature have been detected since the discovery of the Ras Shamrah tablets. It has been something of a surprise to find that they occur mainly in exilic and post-exilic writings, whereas the Ras Shamrah documents come from a period anterior to the Israelite conquest of Palestine. The explanation seems

to be at least twofold: in the Persian period Hebrew writers no longer felt any necessity for being on guard against Canaanite mythology, which they doubtless regarded somewhat as a Puritan poet like Milton regarded Greek mythology; on the other hand, as Albright has pointed out, there had recently been among the Phoenicians themselves a strong revival of interest in their own ancient culture, as a result of which the Jews were no doubt exposed to a wave of what may be called neo-Canaanite influence.¹⁸

During the Persian and Greek periods we note also the emergence in Hebrew religion of ideas which bear a striking resemblance to characteristic features of Zoroastrianism. In particular we find explicit and emphatic expressions of ethical monotheism with stress on the transcendence of God, the belief in resurrection with the whole apocalyptic point of view, a marked development of angelology, and the conception of Satan, not only as one of the "sons of God" with a special function as "adversary" at the heavenly court (Zechariah 3; Job 1f), but also as the evil power who stands over against God and tempts men to sin (1 Chronicles 21). The obscurity which veils Zoroastrian chronology prevents us from determining the precedence in the development of these ideas, as between Zoroastrianism and Judaism. In each instance there are clear and sufficient antecedents within the Hebrew tradition to account for the development without recourse to any foreign influence. At the same time the Jews were now a part of the Persian empire, both in Palestine and in the Diaspora; some of the new ideas were secondary in Judaism but basic and characteristic in Zoroastrianism; and there was a strong affinity between the two faiths in their essential conceptions of the nature of religion, making syncretism easy and natural. That Iranian influence of some sort is present in the apocalyptic literature can hardly be doubted.

As Causse has argued, what happened

was probably that throughout western Asia in this period there was a general syncretistic movement in which all these conceptions developed more or less simultaneously, not only in Judaism and Zoroastrianism but in other religions also.¹⁹ The growth of the cult of Baal Shamin may be regarded as a part of this movement, and it is significant that Yahweh is repeatedly called "the God of heaven" in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Causse suggests that the syncretistic influences were felt first and most strongly in the communities of the Diaspora, from which they made their way into Palestinian Judaism, undergoing there more or less sifting and censorship before what was left of them found expression in the accepted literature.

Moving down into the Greek period we encounter two problems with regard to the latest Old Testament books: the influence of Greek philosophy and the influence of the mystery cults. The former appears, if anywhere in the canonical writings, in the book of Ecclesiastes; even here what we find is not evidence of direct acquaintance with Greek philosophical literature or with any specific school of philosophy, but rather a general cultural atmosphere which held in solution more or less characteristic Greek ideas and attitudes. In the apocryphal Wisdom of Solomon, of course, there is a much closer relation to distinctive Platonic and Stoic ideas.

As regards the mystery cults, I can see no evidence whatever in the Old Testament of any influence from that quarter. The Septuagint is another matter, and in general the probability of such influence there is somewhat greater. Certainly there was plenty of Hellenism in Palestine as well as in the Diaspora. Bickermann has shown that under the high priests Jason and Menelaus, just before the Maccabean revolt, even the official cultus of the temple was so Hellenized as to forfeit the most basic convictions of Judaism.²⁰ Such defection as this, how-

ever, could not find acceptance among those who wrote and collected the books of the Old Testament.

Summing up the net outcome of this very "sketchy" outline, we may say that Yahwism, the religion of the Covenant and the Chosen People, the religion of the Law and the Prophets, maintained a recognizable unity and consistency throughout its history, but was profoundly affected and modified by its contacts with other religions. In general the Yahwistic tradition and the extraneous influences which acted upon it to produce the actual religion of the Hebrews, as it developed through one phase after another, were related somewhat as heredity and environment are related in the growth of human personality. Without the Yahwistic tradition the religion of the Old Testament would not have existed; without the external factors which acted upon it, or rather interacted with it, the religion would have been very different from what it actually was. Throughout the process we see a kind of oscillation and tension—perhaps, to be fashionable, I should say "dialectic"—between syncretism and puristic reaction. Extreme purism might have produced spiritual inbreeding and degeneration. The opposite extreme would have been absorp-

tion and complete dissipation. Judaism avoided both of these perils. Thus it remained alive, and grew, and produced abundant fruit.

NOTES

- ¹*Der Gott der Väter* (1929).
- ²So Albright, *From the Stone Age to Christianity* (1940), p. 189.
- ³*Revue de l'histoire des religions* cx (1934), pp. 50ff.
- ⁴Op. cit. 186-8.
- ⁵*Hebrew Origins* (1936), pp. 86ff.
- ⁶*Archaeol. of Pal. and the Bible*, p. 164: *From the Stone Age . . .* p. 198.
- ⁷*Archaeol. of Pal. and the Bible*, pp. 163ff: *From the Stone Age . . .* pp. 196ff.
- ⁸*Hebrew Origins*, pp. 158ff.
- ⁹H. G. May, *Am. Jour. of Sem. Lang.* 1932, pp. 73ff.
- ¹⁰Meek, Waterman, et al., *The Song of Songs, A Symposium* (1924).
- ¹¹Waterman, *Am. Jour. of Sem. Lang.* 1921, pp. 36ff; Olmstead, *Hist. of Pal. and Syria* (1931), chap. viii.
- ¹²*Die Ursprünge des altisraelitischen Rechts* (1934).
- ¹³*Die Codex Hammoeabi en zijn Verhouding tot de Wetsbepalingen in Exodus* (1939).
- ¹⁴*From the Stone Age . . .* p. 233.
- ¹⁵*Psalmenstudien II* (1922).
- ¹⁶See unpublished dissertation (in Yale library) by Paul J. Keller, *The Cultic Interpretation of the Enthronement Psalms*.
- ¹⁷See now J. M. McGlinchey, *The Teaching of Amen-em-ope and the Book of Proverbs* (Cath. Univ. of America, 1939).
- ¹⁸*From the Stone Age . . .* p. 243.
- ¹⁹*Les dispersés d'Israël*, pp. 103ff; *Du groupe ethnique à la communauté religieuse*, pp. 302ff.
- ²⁰*Der Gott der Makkabäer* (1937), pp. 111ff.

Syncretism and New Testament Religion

DONALD W. RIDDLE

THE problem of syncretism in the rise of Christianity has two aspects, descriptive and interpretative: to show what syncretism there was, and to explain how it operated. Both are involved by the subject of this study; it is assumed that there was syncretism in Christianity's rise and growth, and that its operation was a phase of the religious life which is reflected in the New Testament.

The first aspect can be suggested in a brief statement, whose correctness is not open to question. Jesus was Jewish, and his religion was a form of late Judaism. His language was Aramaic. The entire course of his life was spent within the land of Israel. His associates and followers were Jewish, whose language was Aramaic and whose religion was Judaism. Christianity began when certain of Jesus' followers had experiences which led them to believe that Jesus, who had been put to death, was alive. They reported these experiences, and on the basis of the acceptance of their stories groups of like-minded people were associated together to form the first cults of Jesus.

Soon it became apparent that others than Jews were hearing and responding to these stories. The next step, of the greatest importance for the subsequent history of Christianity, was the taking of these stories to non-Jews in territories outside the land of Israel (i. e., outside the land of Jesus)—in a word, the transition to gentile environments. It was not long until the non-Jews in what may now be called emerging Christianity outnumbered the Jews, and until the influence of gentiles outweighed the influence of Jews. Thus there was a racial and cultural, as well as a geographical transition.

Presently the developments in Christianity occasioned so decisive a turn that hostility to Jews and to Judaism is to be observed, and Christianity presently became a gentile religion. In the process the language medium was changed; the language of the primitive preaching, originally Aramaic and presently Aramaic and Greek, became dominantly Greek and finally became almost exclusively Greek. What are generally conceded to be the earliest Christian writings were written in Greek, the New Testament gospels are in Greek,¹ and the later books of the New Testament are, of course, in Greek, as are the contemporary extra-New Testament examples of early Christian literature.

The religion of the New Testament is, naturally, reflected in the New Testament writings. These writings contain many words and concepts which reflect Judaism, and many words and concepts which reflect gentile religion. Thus the religious life which is reflected is inclusive of Jewish and of gentile values. This indicates the syncretism in New Testament religion.

It will be well to center attention on a few examples. In the gospels Jewish values are reflected in practices which form the subject of many of the gospel stories, and in words and concepts. Of the former there may be mentioned, quite objectively, the function of Torah, such particular examples as the questions about the law of marriage and divorce, teachings about fasting, ritual handwashing, stories about the Temple cultus, the Passover, etc. Of concepts, the attitude toward and the understanding of Torah may be mentioned, and such ideas as the Kingdom of God, life after death, messianism (e. g., the titles Son of Man, Son of David), etc. That these and other items go

back to, reflect, and involve Judaism is obvious.

Jewish elements are equally plainly to be found in Paul's letters. Here the whole question of Torah is a live one. Here, too, one encounters ideas about the Kingdom of God. Jewish writings are abundantly quoted; occasionally the method and technique of interpreting Jewish literature indubitably reflects Judaism.² The Jewish attitude toward idolatry is an inevitable concomitant of the Jewish conception of God's spiritual nature and his oneness.

But on the other hand, throughout the New Testament gentile elements are also reflected. The well-known Latinisms of the earliest gospel furnish examples of the manner in which terminology involves syncretism. The range of concepts with reference to "Savior" and "salvation" in Luke-Acts (gospel section as well as Acts section) require the student to investigate possible gentile influence here. One can see very readily in the Fourth Gospel the shift to gentile understanding of the idea of life after death. Since a number of the gospel miracle stories are so closely similar to miracle stories in gentile cults and culture, these have to be studied with sufficient breadth to take into account the gentile parallels. Exorcism by means and formula is so strongly suggestive of the techniques reflected in the Hellenistic magical papyri that here, again, the gentile world impinges upon the study of New Testament religion.

In Paul's letters it is immediately apparent that the fundamental question of Torah involves un-Jewish aspects, for Paul the Jew reiterates the formula which is as un-Jewish as can be, so much so that it is nothing short of anti-Jewish: No one, Paul (for a Jew) surprisingly says is pronounced acquitted by doing what Torah requires, and everyone who has the faith of Christ is pronounced acquitted. Thus Paul insists that non-Jews in the cults of Jesus not only need not, but must not become Jews.

The observation of Paul's rigid and consistent application of this formula takes the student to the point at which he sees unmistakably that in Paul emerging Christianity functioned as a salvation cult. That Paul's formulation led him to state the process in terms very similar to those of the mystery cults, as in Romans 6:3ff, Colossians 2:12ff, precipitates the very problem of this symposium and this paper. Still looking broadly one sees that Paul's general picture of Jesus is closely similar to that of the cult myth of any mystery. The solution of these questions, dealing objectively with the evidence involved, has been and is one of the most hotly and stubbornly debated issues of New Testament study.

As it seems to me, the question whether there was syncretism in early Christianity, and thus whether there is syncretism in the New Testament, admits of no doubt. There is much more evidence of it than the few examples cited suggest. The relevant question is, rather, what is indicated by the plain and abundant evidence of syncretism in early Christian sources.

Any experience with the problem, however, shows that there has been wide disagreement in reaction to the evidence and to the whole problem. Many scholars have denied, and some now deny, the fact of syncretism in early Christianity. Their insistence is that everything in Christianity came from Jesus or was otherwise original in the movement itself. There have been and are those who recognize the influence of Judaism upon Christianity, but deny any influence from pagan sources. In the opposite camp there have been and are no few scholars who have not only affirmed gentile influence upon Christianity, but who have taken the alleged influence of environment as the one key which unlocks the closed doors of the secret of Christianity's origin and development.

One occupation in this camp is the collection of "parallels." So long ago as the

18th century John Lightfoot compiled a sort of Strack-Billerbeck, which he called *Horae Judaicae et Talmudicae*, and J. J. Wettstein collected a most useful store of parallels from patristic and classical as well as Jewish sources. This interest persists to our own day,³ although, fortunately, it is sometimes broadened to include not only verbal parallels but parallels of ideas and cult practices.

Professor Goodenough has recently said,⁴ and has well said, that in dealing with the problem of syncretism what is needed is not parallels but bridges. It would seem that everyone should heartily and wholly agree with him, whether or not there is general acceptance of the startling example which he himself offers. I desire in this paper to offer for consideration two other bridges, or at least to offer materials for the construction of two abutments of one of the bridges which are needed.

One of the basic faults of biblical study is the limitation of its efforts to literature, involving in some areas purely literary analysis. This is the obvious shortcoming of the compilation of parallels. There should be instant and unanimous agreement that no parallel is of significance unless it involves functional as well as literary coincidence. But the matter goes much deeper than this: it is only as one can describe and explain the actual religious life,⁵ at the vital point of behavior (i. e., it is still not sufficient to deal with ideas, teachings, doctrines), that the religion of a person or of a group can be understood. Thus the problems of syncretism can never be solved by the study of words, whether of single words or groups of words. Nor does it follow that there was *influence* of environment, whether of the Jewish or the gentile environment, upon a Christian or upon the Christian movement, merely by exhibiting the parallel. The actual *effect* of environment must be shown if the assertion is to be convincing, and the

only way that this can be shown is in the area of the actual religious life.

Now, two things can readily be shown of the process of the religious life in early Christianity, specifically in Pauline Christianity. It *functioned* as a salvation cult, and its basic concept was that of the salvation of the individual. In Pauline religion, for example, the message of Jesus was proclaimed, hearers either believed it or refused to believe it. Those who believed, as Paul said, were "pronounced acquitted by their faith." These confessed Jesus as their Lord, and their natures were changed. Formerly they were "old" creatures; now they are "new" creatures; formerly they were lost, now they are saved, formerly they were evil, now they are good, formerly they were flesh persons, now they are spirit persons. Having believed, having confessed, their natures having been changed, they were baptized and were members of a church; henceforth they were expected to live accordingly, both in their personal moral-religious lives and in their cult relationships.

In the latter aspect there emerges the related questions of cult practice; these persons were baptized, and upon occasion they ate the "Lord's supper." It is one of the problems of syncretism whether or not these ordinances were sacramental in nature; the question of origins, as well as the question of influence of environment, is involved. If these ordinances were sacraments the likelihood that they were derived from Judaism is reduced to the very slightest possibility, for the proselyte bath and the passover meal, usually alleged as the Jewish prototypes where possible Jewish origin is affirmed, were not sacramental in nature. I leave this matter untouched; if Reitzenstein has not proved that these ordinances were sacraments, and if he has not proved that they are examples of gentile syncretism, I cannot prove it. I should like to mention

only, with reference to the Lord's supper, that 1 Corinthians 11:27-31 certainly points in the direction of the sacramental, whatever may be one's judgment of the origin of the ordinance.

The distinction of religious process in Pauline Christianity from Judaism is so plain that it cannot be missed. Judaism did not have this conception of the religious process at all; Judaism was, to use the terminology of evangelical religion, a religion of the once-born, not of the twice-born. In Judaism one did not have to be thus saved, because he was not lost. The underlying view of human nature was different; Judaism did not teach that a man was sinful and evil by nature, but that in him God has implanted the inclination to evil and the inclination to good. The religious process in Judaism was then for the man to learn from Torah what God's will for him was, and how to do what Torah required, and it then placed upon him the responsibility to do it. If he sinned, he must go to Torah to find what was his sin, and he must repent and do what Torah required. It cannot be said that the Judaism of the environment of Jesus was a salvation cult; it did not function as a salvation cult at all. Whatever is to be said of the Temple cultus and of the Day of Atonement, it cannot be said that Judaism functioned as Pauline Christianity functioned.

Furthermore, Judaism was a quasi-national religion; it was not a religion of individualism. The Jews were a people, a folk, and solidarity was one of their most highly prized and sought for values. Detailed religious conceptions took shape in conformity to this, e. g., life after death, the Kingdom of God, etc. It is one of the most interesting and one of the most significant facts of the history of religion that Judaism consistently proved to be the sole exception to the otherwise complete acceptance of and adaptation to the thorough-

going individualism which has been shown to be a fundamental element in Hellenistic culture.

That Christianity did accept and adapt to this social attitude is unquestionable. I do not suppose that all early Christianity did so. So far as the actual Jewish Christianity can be described it represents an exception. Paul might claim that since no one was pronounced acquitted by doing what Torah requires, and that since anyone who exercised faith in Christ was thereby pronounced acquitted, he and Cephas and James were pronounced acquitted by faith and not by doing what Torah requires. It does not follow that James, however, thought so. Rather, one may conclude that Luke-Acts (Acts 21:20) correctly represents James' group as calling to Paul's attention that there were those who have believed who are zealous for Torah. It is inconceivable that James could have accepted Paul's insistence to the Galatians that they not only need not but must not become circumcised (i. e., become Jews) and do what Torah required. But certainly gentile Christianity accepted and adapted itself to Hellenistic individualism.

Here, then, in gentile Christianity's individualism and its function as a salvation cult, are the two bridges, or the two abutments of a bridge between Christianity's beginnings in Palestinian Judaism and its character as it is to be seen in gentile environments. These are not mere "parallels"; these are actual processes of the religious life, which are observable at the vital point of actual behavior. This process is accurately called regeneration, and it is the same process as that which is to be seen in the actual operation and function of the mystery cults. One may be unconvinced by Reitzenstein's word studies; one may well dissent from Macchioro's assertion that in order for him to have taught and written as he did Paul must have joined the

Orphic cult. But in these phenomena one must perforce see that Paul presented a message of salvation, the salvation of the individual. Professor Willoughby has brilliantly demonstrated the function of certain Hellenistic cults as cults of regeneration. The parallel of function differs from the parallel of words. The parallel of words may or may not indicate a relationship; the parallel of function conclusively shows it.

It is much more difficult to demonstrate the actual function, the very religious process, in the area of the gospels. Yet the facts cited at the beginning of the paper demand explanation. The point, of course, is that the gospel materials developed and the gospels were ultimately written in and after the transition of Christianity to gentile environments. It is thus possible that environmental factors had their influence and left their marks on the gospels. The possibility is the more widely allowed with reference to the influence of Judaism. The question whether there is evidence of gentile influence, and therefore syncretism, in the gospels is debated.

To cite more or less apparent examples, the birth stories immediately suggest themselves. Generally speaking it is not easy to see that stories of the generation of a child by God could have been created in Jewish circles, or could have been well suited as evangelistic propaganda among Jews. On the other hand, such stories in gentile religious mythology were common. As has been mentioned, the miracle stories of the gospels have been examined in the light of pagan *Wundererzählungen*,⁶ and obvious parallels have been shown. Similarly the practice of exorcism, particularly by the use of means (amulets, etc.) and by the pronouncement of formulae, is well known to have been much more common in gentile environments than in Palestinian Judaism—the magical papyri furnish numerous instances. Now, since healing miracles in

the gospels suggest competition with the Asklepios cults,⁷ it is logical to view the gospel stories of exorcisms as examples of the use of similar stories in the primitive preaching. As has also been suggested, the "Savior" and "salvation" terminology suggests the pagan redemption cults, so that the parables of Luke 15 are readily understood as against this background in primitive Christianity. The parallel of conception (not merely of words) between Matthew 11:25-27, Luke 10:21-23 and gnosticism is unmistakable. Mark 4:11f patently suggests the mystery cults.

To view these examples at the vital point of the religious life and experience is much more convincing than to content oneself with merely literary comparison. For obviously early Christianity *did* present Jesus to gentiles as Lord, much the same as the hero and mystery cults presented their Lords as healers and saviors. It is readily conceivable that the stories of Jesus' miraculous conception and virgin birth met with positive response when presented to gentile publics. Such a story of exorcism as that of Acts 19:11-20 not only exactly parallels familiar pagan stories, but the religious reactions recited reflect exactly the same type of experience as is to be generalized from the pagan stories, e. g., "The name of the Lord Jesus came to be held in high honor" shows the awe of the public at the unmistakable exhibit of dangerous as well as beneficent power. It should not be forgotten that Acts is part of Luke-Acts, and thus part of a gospel. There is much to be said for Dean Colwell's explanation of the absence of exorcisms from the Fourth Gospel⁸—that such stories (however much they were suited to other circles in Christian evangelism) were not suited to this presentation of Jesus which labors to free Christianity from objectionable criticism.

These examples, not of course an exhaustive list, are cited as illustrations of

what becomes the result when the phenomena of syncretism in the gospels are studied with reference to the religious life, rather than from the much more limited standpoint of literary or verbal parallels. No attempt is made or implied to determine possible influence of environment upon Jesus. All that is being attempted is to show that when the actual processes of Christian evangelism are observed, whether in the writings of Paul or in certain areas of the gospels, it is seen that Christianity functioned as a redemption cult, that the messages of its preachers contained elements which were intended to secure the same result that was sought by the proponents of pagan redemption cults, and that the response on the part of persons of the public addressed was the same as that of the members of the Hellenistic redemption cults. This, it would seem, is the way by which syncretism in New Testament religion is to be observed.

It has for a long time seemed odd to me that scholars who are generally negative to the alleged influence of pagan religions upon Christianity have been willing to recognize that there was such influence from Judaism. This view seems to be based upon the fact that there is an intimate relation between Jewish religious literature and Christianity, or, to put it more bluntly, the fact that Christianity took over the Old Testament. It is thus a theological matter. These scholars do not appear to have any sympathy with Judaism as an operating religion. The opposite is true; they are usually quite negative and hostile to Judaism, whether the Judaism of our day or the Judaism of the days of early Christianity. Their position in large part approximates, or at least shares, that of Justin Martyr, who abundantly reflects that appropriation of Jewish Scripture, but has only enmity to Jews and to Judaism. The judgments of such scholars is to be seriously

discounted; what they are allowing is not the influence of Judaism as a religion contemporaneous with early Christianity, but some kind of relation between the Old Testament (which of course is actually understood as a Christian literature) and the New Testament. They are not building one of those needed bridges. They are not dealing with religion at all, but with literature, or at the most with theology.

How different is the case with Professor Goodenough's work on Philo⁹ and his projections of judgment of Hellenistic Judaism! It is to be hoped that the startling newness of his view will not preclude its further consideration by the readers of his books. If it is given full consideration it may be predicted that however much it may be modified in detail the general statement will be accepted and put into application. For it deals with Hellenistic Judaism as a religion, not with its literature alone, nor merely with its ideas; it penetrates to the actual religious life. With it may be compared on the pagan side Professor Willoughby's *Pagan Regeneration*,¹⁰ the unique element of which is that it, too, deals with the actual religious experience in the pagan cults. Such studies as these go far to redeem the barrenness and the lack of convincingness in much of the literature on religious syncretism in the Mediterranean world. These studies provide the living and functional background for the study of the New Testament in relation to its environment. One may, as indeed one ought, dismiss many another merely linguistic or literary study as "not proven," but such studies as these demand serious consideration, because they deal with life.

Likewise the result is clear and assured when syncretism in early Christianity is studied on the basis of early Christian life. One encounters then not mere parallels; one is not left with the central question—

(Concluded on Page 67)

Religious Syncretism and Undergraduate Biblical Courses

FLORENCE B. LOVELL

FOR MANY of us nothing is more interesting than an investigation into how things came to be as they are. To be sure, we sometimes meet young people so full of reforming zeal that they wish to do away with all traces of the past. They will make all things new, and have no need of what has gone before. They remind one of Baron Munchausen who found himself in the moon with no means of descending to the earth except a length of rope, which he proceeded to tie around one of the horns of the moon; he slid down to the end of the rope, but the earth was still a long way beneath him. He was in a difficult position, but had a flash of genius. Looking up, he realized that he wished to go down, not up, hence there was no longer any need of being attached to the moon. He therefore unhooked the rope from the moon and swung it beneath him, slid down the length of the rope again, and again threw the rope down and by this process reached the earth. There was no need of being attached to anything that had preceded. The present sufficed. Any movement that purports to make a clean break with the past is as fantastic as this. However, judging by the fact that history courses are fairly popular among undergraduates, I think that young people are as interested in the significance of the past as are their elders.

The syncretic nature of religion may be observed when studying in fields which are not primarily religious. In the past few weeks several examples have come to my attention. A course in anthropology offered a student the opportunity to observe the change produced on certain African religions when transplanted to Haiti and

Brazil. The African serpent deity, Damballa, becomes in the New World St. Patrick, who drove the snakes out of Ireland, or Moses, whose rod became a serpent. A course in Mediaeval History required a student to write a paper on witchcraft, through which she learned that both in Britain and on the Continent, witches, men and women, were the determined survivors of an ancient fertility cult which Christianity was endeavoring to supplant. The Maypole dance and superstitions like that of the black cat hark back to their rites. A student of Latin literature was reading in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* that the great goddess on appearing to the Ass said, "The Phrygians who are the first of all men call me the Mother of the gods at Pessinus, the Athenians who are sprung from their own soil, Cecropian Minerva, the Cyprians, Paphian Venus, the Cretans, Diana, the Eleusians their ancient goddess Ceres,—and the Egyptians who are excellent in all kinds of ancient doctrine, and by their proper ceremonies accustomed to worship me, call me by my true name, Queen Isis."

Such knowledge of syncretism as these students acquire comes to them by the way and as a by-product. It is only advanced students who are qualified to do any thorough work in the subject, for it involves at least two cultures; and only those students whose range of work has covered more than one cultural group are prepared to study religious syncretism as such. Therefore, in making available to undergraduates the fascinating records of ancient times which have been described to us this afternoon we encounter an initial

demand imposed by the subject itself. It is possible, however, and I should like to add, essential, to make a beginning of the study in an introductory course in Biblical Literature or in other introductory courses primarily concerned with religion. One needs to use method, the best possible, in any thorough-going study of syncretism; but for the ordinary college student who is usually a stranger in religious studies, the matter is approached indirectly; it is here a little and there a little, with the result that at the end of the term the student emerges with at least some sound deductions on the subject, and one who has taken particular delight in it may have done a little intensive study.

If we say, "Today we shall study history, and we will describe such and such a period," no initial interest is aroused. But we may kindle some understanding and provoke discussion if we say, "Today we are living in Alexandria, and Hypatia has just been killed by a mob of monks; you are one of her students," or "You are a monk," or "the bishop." "What are you going to do?" To kindle a student's historical imagination is not always easy, and sometimes impossible because she hasn't enough facts. Some accumulation of solid facts must serve as the airplane carrier, if she is to take wing. Assuming some knowledge, the greatest incentive to learn more facts is to make what she has come alive. If we would make the study of syncretism or of any phase of history significant for our students it must be dynamic and alive instead of dead. In order to make an objective appraisal of any movement or event, we must first feel it subjectively; in some way we must become a part of the situation. First we must be subjective; afterward we can detach ourselves from it and form our judgment.

In introducing a class to the Synoptic Gospels I often use a simple device which I

shall describe not because it is in any sense a model to be followed, but because it is an instance of the effort to project the minds of the students into another place and time,—the city of Rome in one of the late decades of the first century, when the first Gospel was written. One can usually assume that college students have at least a bowing acquaintance with Rome, through the study of Latin, or of ancient history. After a few days spent in surveying the Mediterranean world, the class for this day has been required to read the Gospel of Mark, keeping in mind certain questions which have been assigned as guideposts to their thinking about it, such as, "What was the author interested in?" "Was the book written for Jews or Gentiles?" The purpose of the class exercise is to make vivid the fact that there was a time when the Gospel was new, and to imagine the effect of the book upon non-Christians who read it for the first time. Whether the primary purpose of Mark was the edification of the Christian community or propaganda among non-Christians, or some other purpose, certainly it became known to some people of both classes. Into what terms of their own thinking did these people translate this little book? Itself a blend, what varieties of blending did it produce in individuals? in classes of individuals?

When the class opens, the instructor assumes the role of a Roman matron, and thanks the assembled girls for responding to her invitation to keep her company on her daughter's birthday; they will be glad to hear, as friends of her daughter Celia, that she has reached Alexandria safely, having gone with her father on a business trip. The real reason for the invitation, however, is the perturbation which the mother feels over her daughter's newly awakened interest in a religious cult which is spreading in Rome. She has had her old Greek slave, an excellent scribe, make a number of

copies of a little book pertaining to this cult, and has circulated it among these friends of her daughter. She calls them by name, Virginia, Claudia, etc., all educated girls, belonging to good families. What do they think of it? Thus the setting is laid. After the first brief moment of bewilderment the students get their bearings, smile and act their parts. The first answers are likely to be without thought, but as they have time, they dig down into the situation. One thinks the hero is magnificent; another says the marvelous deeds attributed to him are preposterous; her neighbor says No, her grandmother has told her of miraculous cures of blindness that took place in the Campania, years ago; it sounded just like this. One says she is much attracted by the lofty moral teaching; another asks wherein it is any better than the Stoic morals. Still another says that there are a good many things in it that she cannot understand at all, and names one or two. In response to a question from the matron, a girl named Tullia replies, Yes, her mother was initiated years ago into the mystery of the Great Isis; but her father has stood aloof from all cults, and certainly would not allow his daughter to have anything to do with this one. The matron asks if any of the girls have ever been invited to a meeting of the Christians on the Appian Way. A few have read Marius the Epicurean; but thus far no one has ventured to describe the assemblage of Christians. And so we go on. This kind of thing, of course, can be done only in a class where students are accustomed to speaking out freely. Sometimes I have asked students afterward if this device had been too elementary, but on the contrary, they seem to approve of it. Not long since, on beginning a more advanced course in the Synoptic Gospels, I asked some questions in review. Where was Mark produced? All responded, In Rome. What makes you say so? I con-

tinued. Here I record to my shame that no one remembered any of the evidences. Rather sheepishly one finally volunteered that the only reason she had said "in Rome" was that this little drama had fixed it in her mind. This impressed upon me the need for more dramatization, rather than less. The evidence for the Roman provenance should somehow have been impressed upon their minds, though not necessarily by means of drama.

In introductory work devices of various kinds serve to make the material vivid. A Roman soldier left on British soil a bronze votive offering to Mithra, with his inscription upon it. Until recently, at least, it was in a London museum. A picture of it, bought at the museum, witnesses to the far-flung banner of the Persian cult. Such ordinary antiquities as bronze statuettes of Osiris and Isis holding the child Horus bring more clearly to mind the Egyptian trinity. And a bronze fish wearing the Isis crown lends color to the statement that people were eating fish on Friday, the day of Venus, long before the Christian era. What was the significance of the crescents on the camels of Zebah and Zalmunneh? Cheap crescents of cast metal with the addition of the Muslim star, may be bought in a street stall of Beirut for fifteen cents. They still adorn the Syrian camels. Astarte figurines may be bought in Jerusalem, and vouched for by the museum authorities, as well as seal cylinders.

In making new ideas assimilable, vividness is not the only desideratum; the teacher needs to be sensitive to the reactions of the students. It is usually a pleasure for a student, young or old, to discover variety and complexity where only simplicity and monotony were expected. And unfortunately most students approach the Bible with little expectation of breadth or range in the subject. When they discover that the plan and principal features of Solomon's temple

were those of Phoenician and Egyptian temples, or that the seraphim of Isaiah's vision were not Christian angels, but theriomorphic symbols of old myths, the emotional reaction is seldom one of shock or disillusionment, but more often of simple surprise, followed by heightened interest. It is possible, however, in introductory courses to produce negative and even hurtful results. There are teachers who take a definitely sadistic pleasure in presenting new material of this kind in such a way as to give the student an emotional shock. They rationalize by saying that it is good for one to be jolted out of her ignorance. But if a teacher ridicules an interpretation which he considers outworn, he is likely to win converts to it. If he says, "Since many an ancient hero is said to have had a divine father and a human mother, it is obviously absurd to believe the birth stories told of Jesus in Matthew and Luke," the student may easily react against both the statement and the teacher. In no department of study are emotions so easily roused. And if the instructor stirs up the heat, no light can enter. The student has a rush of blood to the head, and does no thinking that day. Later on she may be convinced by accumulating evidence, but it is with difficulty. If she raises a question and is easily driven into a corner by the instructor and shown to be ignorant and defenseless, a barrier has been raised between the two which may perhaps never be lowered. The door needs to be left ajar for disagreement, so that no pupil feels forced to accept the teacher's position, be it never so logical. Of a teacher whom I once knew, a pupil said, "He does away with all your pet theories, but he does it very sympathetically."

Let us suppose that a student enters a course of study of the Bible with the assumption that Christianity is a religion based wholly on the teachings of Jesus as found in the four Gospels; and that when

she comes out of the course it seems as conglomerate as the American, in the "Baldad for Americans." The student sees that a religion like Judaism or Christianity has been compounded out of many elements, Sumerian, Semitic, Egyptian, Persian, Greek, and others. Some of the constitutive elements are higher in the scale of religious values than others. Some are low and primitive. How far will the student revalue Judaism of today or Christianity in terms of the lower contributors? Is Judaism merely revamped Oriental superstition? How far will she apprehend all religion simply in terms of its origin? Or, on the contrary, does it mean that the more primitive religions will be revalued in terms of their higher potentialities? For example, students show a ready interest when an instructor reads aloud a deciphered text from Ras Shamra and are quick to sense the illumination which such data throw upon the ancient rites of the Near East. Have they more respect for these old religions when they realize that many Biblical laws are their natural outgrowth? Do they value the mystery cults because of their contribution to Christianity? Or do they think that Christianity would have been better off without any Hellenistic admixture, supposing such isolation had been possible? Students are continually coming upon new facts in their collateral reading. A few weeks ago a student of the Old Testament said that she had several times found references to the dying and rising god. It seemed interesting; she asked if further reading would be suggested in that field. Naturally, the instructor must suggest the reading. But when the student finds on the one hand scholars who confidently assert the influence of the pre-Christian cults upon Christianity, and others who deny it or minimize it, how is she to decide between them? Archaeological data may be variously translated by various men; they are dated at different

times, or differently localised or interpreted. And when the student reads contradictory statements, obviously she is not equipped to decide between them. How far is an instructor justified in helping her to a conclusion which is in line with his own opinion? Naturally, the instructor is doing that all the time unconsciously. How far should it become conscious? There are many such questions raised in the study of syncretism which student and teacher must face together. The undergraduate sees many of the same problems which the advanced student has to meet, but with less ability to find the answer. The questions which arise in her mind are likely to be in the line of her major interest, whether sociology, psychology, philosophy, comparative literature, or whatever it may be. A research worker may pursue his own bent more exclusively, but a college classroom is open to every wind that blows.

In order to understand any religion one must trace its historical development. Like other organisms, it is continually influenced from the outside; its environment is affecting it, as in turn it affects its environment. There are no "pure" races, we are told; and there are probably no "pure" religions, meaning by that, religions which have persisted in their earliest likeness. Scientists search in primitive African communities and among other isolated groups for religions in their oldest forms; but often, even here, long forgotten conquests or early migrations have left their imprint. Some circumstances are more favorable to the eclectic process than others, but everywhere it is going on. As a missionary in China I recall how fitting it was to en-

courage Chinese Christians to observe some kind of festival when everybody else was observing "Tsing Ming," the annual spring season of worshipping ancestors at their graves. Christians too visited the graves of their dead and celebrated the festival with hymns and Christian rites. Similarly, along the roads of Mexico one sees wayside shrines of the Virgin, but she is the old goddess of the locality under a new name. She accepts the same offerings and bestows the same favors as the ancient divinity. In the ceremonies of religion, people are more tenacious of old custom than in other matters. Old forms survive when the meaning is forgotten or changed. Much nearer home, amulets and charms like the horse-shoe and the rabbit's foot remind us that we have not yet let go of our inherited animism. The psychology of religion lends itself readily to the investigation of this kind of thing. Let us make it clear to our students, whether studying the Bible or anything else, that religion is a living and changing thing, not a static formula. It is in process of changing before our eyes; a survey of theological thought today makes that important fact shine out clearly. Change may be for the worse or for the better. In its fundamental aspects, religion changes little, i. e., in its emotional character: awe or reverence, dependence, self-committal, all abide; but its intellectual formulation is in continual flux, and its expressional and formal aspects vary, though to a less degree. If our students have become accustomed to the idea of change in religion, due to communications and contacts, they will be better able to face and to understand the changes which are likely to come about in their generation.

Method in the Study of Religious Syncretism

CARL H. KRAELING

THAT WE must interpret the texts, concepts and institutions of Biblical religion in the light of the religious life and thought contemporary with them is something to which, I take it, we all agree. Our feeling of inner compulsion in the matter is based upon the conviction that the religious aspects of human life and its expression are subject to the same principles of development and growth that we find operating in all other spheres of finite, time-bound existence, and that in reconstructing the process of this development we are, in some measure at least, learning to understand what it means. The immediate basis of this conviction is the idea of evolutionary development as it came to expression in the biological sphere through the Darwinian hypothesis. From this sphere it was transferred to that of social and cultural studies by Herbert Spencer, eventually entering the field of the study of religion as well. In its application to the records and institutions of "revealed" Biblical religion it dates back to the appearance of what has come to be known as the *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule*.

It is now some 50-odd years since Albert Eichhorn laid the foundations for the work of this school in Germany. The work that has been done in the field since that time by European and, since the beginning of the present century also, by American scholars is tremendous and the total effect of the whole development almost incalculable. Utilizing the results of Higher Criticism as the key to the stratification of the religious traditions of the Bible, and availing itself of the wealth of comparative and illustrative material brought to light by a century of historical investigation and archaeological discovery, developmental study has so com-

pletely transformed the picture of Biblical religion that the literature of the older dogmatizing approach seems quite irrelevant and somehow artificial.

The progress that has been achieved is by no means the result of a rectilinear development. There have been excesses, extravaganzas and false conclusions of all kinds. The opening of new fields of study has led to the overemphasis of their importance and to the tendency to see in them the solution of too many of our problems. Not only that, but it seems that in the historical and comparative study of the Bible the laws of evidence and the caution normally associated with scientific analysis have often been thrown to the winds, with intuition coming in to replace dogma as the determinant of our conclusions. Hence the impression gained from reading C. Clemen's *Religionsgeschichtliche Erklärung des Neuen Testaments*, 2 ed., 1924, in which the whole gamut of suggested relationships between the New Testament and contemporary religious phenomena is set down, is that *Religionsgeschichte* is the happy hunting ground for crack-pots, the land in which "the all is one" but everybody has a different idea of what "the one" is or ought to be. Fortunately it is not the sum-total of all the suggestions ever made, but rather the awareness of the general range of factors to be considered and the survival of the most plausible explanations for individual phenomena, that really determines the interpretation of Biblical religion as it develops before our eyes. But those who stand by and watch from the outside what is going on see not the unity of the interpretative process but only the rival claims of its individual representatives. Perhaps we could

reduce the incidence of subjectivism and exaggeration in our own work and simultaneously give those who stand by a more objective basis for appraising what has been and is being offered, if we were to do some hard-headed thinking about the rules and regulations which ought to govern the historical and comparative study of Biblical religion.

For purposes of analysis the work of interpreting the Bible in the light of contemporary life and thought may be divided into two parts. The first has to do with the discovery of parallels to Biblical traditions, concepts and institutions in extra-Biblical material. The second has to do with the reconstruction of the historical process in which the parallel items are brought into relation to one another. In our analysis let us begin with the parallels themselves.

To discover what appear to be parallels to elements of Biblical religion and religious tradition in extra-Biblical sources is by no means difficult. Our minds work in terms of the association of ideas, and no one who is versed in the Bible and reads in the field of history, particularly ancient history, can help being struck by what seem to be such parallels. But right at this point the need for critical judgment manifests itself, for it is necessary to distinguish between real and merely supposititious parallels. Both Philo and his predecessor Aristobulus were struck by what appeared to them to be parallels to the Pentateuch in the writings of Plato. They concluded that Plato had borrowed from Moses, and were undoubtedly quite mistaken in this their opinion. We are liable to similar error. How can we distinguish between real and imaginary parallels?

The ultimate test of a real parallel is apparently whether it continues to recommend itself as such to a consensus of scholarship. But none of us can escape the necessity of assisting in the achievement of

that consensus where we have any degree of competence as judges. Consequently we need a more immediate basis of judgment. Various bases for judgment exist. We apply them almost without realizing what our procedure is. It makes a great difference whether the man who proposes the parallel is a man of recognized standing in the fields involved. It makes a great difference whether in his statement of the case he argues cautiously and simply. It makes a great difference whether he or we are able to fit the new suggestion in with others that have already found approval. All these things count, but they are essentially personal. Can we perhaps approach the matter in a more objective way also, by analyzing the nature of the parallels submitted? I should like to try to do so.

There are in the main, it seems to me, three types of parallels. The first I should like to call the "direct" type. This is the parallel which can be demonstrated by putting one text or one statement of fact alongside the other. As examples of the type I might cite the parallel to the Old Testament Flood Story in the Gilgamesh Epic, or the information concerning the practice of circumcision in circles of the Egyptian priesthood and in certain parts of Syria as well as among the Hebrews, or the story of how Apollonius of Tyana, like Jesus, raised people from the dead. This type of parallel is self-validating in general, and worthy of general acceptance as a parallel.

Next there is what might be called the "partial" parallel, where one fact or tradition is connected with another by means of a judgment which explains certain important differences between the two, as when the myth of Marduk's battle with Tiamat is used to explain various Old Testament locutions and allusions though the myth is never presented *in extenso* in its own cosmogonical setting in the Bible, or as when we connect developed Christian sacramental-

ism with the sacramental practices of the mystery religions though we know that the Christian rites developed out of non-sacramental usages. Such parallels can be entirely trustworthy, but they can also be the very reverse. By way of illustrating the reverse let me refer to an article by A. H. Krappe in which the thoroughly analogous stories of the exposure of both king Sargon I of Babylonia and of Moses in an ark of bulrushes are explained as being derived from a myth said to be found in places as far apart as Persia and Ireland, a myth in which a king, warned that his grandson will depose and kill him, tries vainly to rid himself of the danger by making various attempts on the life of his grandson ("La naissance de Moïse," *RHR*, CVII, 1933, pp. 126-133). Now in considering such an hypothesis we shall have to begin by admitting that stories do travel and that in traveling they do change. This has been amply demonstrated in the comparative study of folklore since the days of the Grimm brothers. Conceivably the important detail of the danger which the exposed child represented to the ruling monarch has disappeared from the Old Testament narrative, and conceivably the Irish did not like the idea of being set adrift in an ark of bulrushes. But before we can say that the story did change in these ways, or entertain an hypothesis that says it did, we must have some evidence indicating that the changes were necessary to the transition from one environment to another. Now it is thoroughly clear why the Babylonian Tiamat myth could find only partial refraction in the Old Testament, and it is quite clear why the influence of sacramental rites as practised in the mystery cults extended only to certain phases of Christian practice and theology. In other words there is cogency for the differentia, and such cogency must be provided by the proponent of "partial" parallels if they are to merit consideration.

The third type I should like to call the "constructed" parallel. It is projected into existence by inference from scattered data, and having been inferred as something that must at one time have existed, it is used to explain an element of the Biblical tradition. This type has the opposite characteristics from the preceding, for it is usually long on cogencies of various kinds, and short on factual support. Examples are the so-called Babylonian Job, who as an individual figure never existed outside the imagination of those who conjured him up, the astral myths that were supposed to provide the prototypes of the Old Testament patriarchs, the myth that was supposed to explain the structure of the Gospel of Mark and the Stoic *topos* on the "unknown God" that was supposed to have been the source for Paul's speech on the Areopagus. They have all passed into the never-never land from which they emanated, but new ones are continually appearing to take their places. Here we have to be particularly cautious, because, constructed as they are *ad hoc*, they carry an element of conviction far in excess of the factual data upon which the construction rests. So many things would be explained if the "Gnostic redeemer" of Bultmann's recent commentary on John were a genuine fact of the tradition. Actually he does not exist in any one clearly identifiable form as a genuine concrete person. He is a construct. As a construct he must be handled with care, but he may none the less be a logical necessity for our interpretation of christological thought and its development. Most constructs are created in response to what seem to be the logical demands of a given situation. Sometimes they are actually verified and turned into "direct" parallels by subsequent discovery of new data, as for instance in the case of the Jewish art which Goodenough projected as the sources of certain phases of Christian art and which archaeological discovery has since proved to have existed. While they are still hypo-

thetical they can be criticized in terms of the inferential procedure that has created them and in terms of the verisimilitude of the construct itself. Certainly we ought to understand what their value and their limitations are, and be wary of pyramiding other constructs upon them as a base.

Perhaps the classification of parallels here suggested is utterly artificial and should be replaced by one that is more accurate and natural. But it would be difficult to think along such lines as these without coming to a clearer understanding of the rules and regulations, as yet unformulated, that should guide us in the developmental study of Biblical religion. Supposing, then, that we have developed some idea of what parallels are, the next step in the formulation of a methodology for the study of religious syncretism would seem to be to ask what do the parallels signify. Clearly we have here, at least for the "direct" and "partial" parallels, two possibilities. Either the parallel accounts are related, so that the one is the source of the other, or they are unrelated and the resemblance between them is, so to speak, "entirely coincidental." The existence of this two-fold possibility allows for a great possibility of error in the reconstruction of the historical process. Can we set up any criteria that would help us to minimize the incidence of error in our own work and that would provide a basis for judging the work of others?

Again the ultimate test of whether a given phenomenon of Biblical religion is to be derived from a known extra-Biblical counterpart is apparently the verdict of a consensus of scholarship over a period of time. But again this is something that does not transpire apart from our individual judgment in the matter, and the question is can we develop a basis for formulating such judgment? I should like in this connection to make two suggestions, for whatever they may be worth.

1. Where dependence of the phenomena

of Biblical religion upon extra-Biblical parallels is suggested, it apparently makes some difference what the locus of the extra-Biblical parallel is, in time and place. That is, the hypothesis of relationship will be judged improbable, remotely possible, possible or probable in proportion as the outside parallel belongs to a sphere otherwise culturally and religiously significant for that in which the Biblical development in question took place. One of the stumbling-blocks of Robertson Smith's immortal *Religion of the Semites* has been his use of totemism as the explanation of certain phenomena in Semitic religion in general and of Hebrew religion in particular. Totemism is of course a well-known factor of primitive religion in many parts of the globe and in Robertson Smith's day was regarded as being of the stuff of all primitive religion. This generalization has now been discarded. Meanwhile we have been able to trace the history of the ancient Orient back some five millennia before Christ, and have found no reflections in any phase of the Oriental art of these concrete expressions of totemistic belief that appear in genuinely totemistic religious groups. Other explanations of Hebrew clan names, and of rules concerning the distinction between and the use of certain animal groups being available, the totemistic hypothesis has been set aside as improbable.

In the early years of this century it was something of a fad to derive elements of early Christian tradition from India. So for instance the New Testament account of Christ's walking on the water was explained as being directly taken from the Buddhistic parallel contained in the account of the conversion of Kāśyapas. Now it is perfectly possible to make out a case for contacts between India and the Near East from the period of the Seleucids on down to New Testament times, but the general verdict remains and has been confirmed by our increased knowledge of Hellenistic and Roman civilization, that culturally and religiously the Near and the Middle East had little to

do with each other. Anyone, therefore, who would be inclined to regard the New Testament stories of the walking on the water, the stilling of the storm, the stater in the fish's mouth and the miraculous draft of fishes as the natural folklore of pious seaside communities of Christians along the Lake of Galilee, would find the hypothesis of Buddhistic derivation for one of these stories improbable. Of course the possibility of derivation still remains, but it will be judged remote if other explanations exist.

Our general judgment on this point, then, will be that the extra-Biblical sources for Biblical religion will for the most part be found in parallels coming from loci related to the focus of the Biblical development, both in time and place. In other words, it is antecedently much more likely that the Code of Hammurabi could have inspired certain portions of the Book of the Covenant, or the "Admonitions of Amenemope" certain portions of the Book of Proverbs, or the Syrian or Asiatic use of imprinted emblems the Christian conception of the *sphragis*, the seal, or the Stoic ethical exhortation the Pauline catalogues of vices and virtues. Granting that there is an antecedent probability, how does that antecedent probability become an actual one? This is perhaps a more pressing matter, and with respect to it I should like to make my second suggestion.

2. Apart from instances in which direct literary relationship can be demonstrated, a phenomenon inside the Biblical tradition will need to be regarded as dependent upon an extra-Biblical source only if it has something approximating a natural *Sitz im Leben* in the latter. What I am venturing to do here is to extend a principle of *Formgeschichte* to the sphere of *Religionsgeschichte*. To illustrate let us consider the relation of the Code of Hammurabi to certain well-known sections of the Book of the Covenant. Those parts of the Book of the Covenant which show analogies to the Code of Hammurabi differ from other parts of early He-

brew law in the formulae used and even more significantly in the cultural environment and the humanitarian outlook upon which they are predicated and with which they deal. To the extent that these formulae, this environment and this outlook are foreign to the nomadic phase of Hebrew life and simultaneously well-rooted in Babylonian civilization, the relevant parts of the Book of the Covenant that display them may safely be assumed to have been influenced by the Babylonian code, whether directly or indirectly. A similar argument can be advanced with regard to the Pauline catalogues of vices and virtues. We know the general character of ethical instruction in the Old Testament, in later Judaism and in the teaching of Jesus. It takes the form of commands, precepts, injunctions, wisdom sayings, parables and the like, but is almost always concrete. By contrast, in the Greek world, the good is defined rather than enjoined, and the ethical formulations are usually impersonal, analytical and abstract. The Pauline catalogues are basically non-hebraic formulations. Their *Sitz im Leben* is Greek. Paul and the hellenistic Jews who preceded him may therefore be assumed to this extent to have been influenced by their Greek environment.

Now there are, of course, many cases where it is utterly impossible to provide such support for the hypothesis of relationship between parallels. Sometimes that is because the parallels offer nothing characteristic to one particular culture pattern or another. So for instance in the case of the parallel stories of Appollonius of Tyana and Jesus raising the dead. In such cases, just because there is nothing characteristic about the events narrated, dependence of the one story upon the other seems to be improbable. Sometimes, on the other hand the required support can not be provided because the parallels can each be supplied with its own *Sitz im Leben*. The Old Testament idea of resurrection and of a final judgment beyond

death can have come to the Jews from the Persians where it is a well-established part of a theological system. I am inclined to believe that it did. But it is equally possible that this idea developed among the Hebrews from their conception of personality and from the belief in God's righteousness. In such cases we should continue to hold the question of outside influence open and undecided.

So much for parallels and their significance. At the beginning of this discussion I indicated that for purposes of analysis the work of interpreting Biblical religion in terms of the life and thought contemporary with it could be divided into two parts, the first having to do with the parallels, the second with the interpretation of the historical process in which they play a part. In reality the two go hand in hand, and in dealing with the *Sitz im Leben* principle we have already begun our consideration of the second element of the procedure. But something more remains to be said.

Every effort in the field of *Religionsgeschichte* presupposes the desire to reconstruct and interpret at least some part of the process of the development of Biblical religion. Our hypotheses and our minds being what they are, we naturally tend ultimately to create as comprehensive a picture of the entire development as we can. Only in proportion as our picture becomes comprehensive can we hope to discover what are the dominant forces in the developmental process and find bases for deciding between alternative solutions of particular problems left open along the way. It happens every so often that a comprehensive picture of this sort is presented so brilliantly that for a while it dominates the stage, bidding fair to provide the key to the solution of our basic problems. Three of them we all know, the pan-Babylonian hypothesis, the mystery religions hypothesis, and the *iranisches Erlösungsmysterium* hypothesis. No one of them has proved to be as important as was

originally thought, but each has left us the richer in our understanding of certain aspects of the religious development which we study. Two new hypotheses are in these days appearing in our very midst, the Semitic monotheism hypothesis and the Jewish mystery cult hypothesis. Can we from past experiences formulate principles that might guide us in the construction and evaluation of such hypotheses? Let us consider the matter in terms of the *iranisches Erlösungsmysterium* hypothesis of Reitzenstein.

The *iranisches Erlösungsmysterium* was a marvelous construction that climaxed years of devotion to the literature of syncretistic religion in the Near East, and that capitalized upon the publication of the Mandaean and Manichean texts to infer from them the conception that the religious development of the Orient in the centuries immediately before and after the beginning of our era was dominated by a pattern of Iranian belief which swept in out of the East and, entering into combination with Semitic and Greek concepts, became the controlling factor in pagan syncretistic, Jewish apocalyptic, and Christian thought. At the heart of this Iranian pattern of belief is the idea that the soul is of divine origin, an imprisoned fragment of deity. She derives actually from the person of the heavenly prototypic man, who, to redeem her, appears as savior and judge in the cosmic process. The redeemer has thus redeemed himself and in so doing terminated the cosmic process which the imprisonment of the soul in matter originally brought into being.

The hypothesis is much more elaborate and convincing than any such brief summary might indicate. It does throw light on a vast array of materials and there are many profound insights in the writings in which it is presented. Yet as a factor in the interpretation of Biblical religion it has already lost much of its importance. Wherein

lay its weaknesses? I offer the following suggestions for what they may be worth.

In the first place Reitzenstein worked with supreme disregard of the fact that the evidential value of sources is in a large measure restricted to the period to which they belong. There may be exceptions to this rule, but it is a good one with which to start. What accounts for Reitzenstein's disregard of the laws of evidence is an error to which we are all liable, namely the failure to distinguish between logical and chronological priority. Because he could explain the Q section in the Gospels ending with the words "your house shall be left unto you desolate" from the first book of the Right Mandaean Ginza (a composite work of the 7th century A. D.), that made this first book earlier than Q and substantiated the claim of the Mandaeans to be the descendants of the disciples of John the Baptist. Logical and chronological priority must be kept strictly apart for they are two different things.

A second invalidating factor of Reitzenstein's hypothesis was his choice of the *point d'appui*. The basic pattern of Iranian religious belief which he thought to see refracted everywhere actually existed in Manicheism and was suggested to him by the reading of the new Manichean texts. This fact in itself, however, is enough to undermine its value as the instrument of a far-reaching hypothesis, because Manicheism is a violently individual religion, a syncretism to end syncretisms, born of a confused and disturbed age. True it shares many beliefs with other religions from India to the West, but it is the poorest possible source for the real knowledge of what was going on in any of them. We know something about the religion of Parthia, about Magian, Zarathustrian and even pre-Zarathustrian religion in Persia, but Manicheism does not reflect any one of them accurately. How then can it reflect a proto-Gnostic, pre-Christian universal Iranian religion of sal-

vation? The thing to be learned from these statements is, of course, that a hypothesis should move so far as is possible within the frame of accepted facts about the religions in the environment of the Bible, and should take as its starting point some well-defined or well-definable aspect of the development.

A third defect of Reitzenstein's hypothesis I am inclined to find in the fact that it was created in the main from literary sources, from texts and written traditions. Now I should be the last to wish to underestimate the significance of the written document, but I fear that the *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule* has proceeded too often on the assumption that the texts give the entire picture. Perhaps this is the result of the training of its members in the study of Biblical religion, where non-literary evidence is virtually non-existent. If we had the evidence for it, I think we should find that Hebrew and Christian popular religion were invariably somewhat different from the religion illustrated by the texts, and the picture of the development of Biblical religion different at many points from that which we construct from the texts. Certainly our idea of the nature and function of the Mystery Religions as it is gradually taking shape in connection with the study of the monuments on the one hand and of Greek popular religion on the other, is profoundly different from that formulated in the Mystery Religion phase of the study of Christian thought on the basis of texts from the Neoplatonic era. At Dura, where Iranian influence was very strong in the period when the *iranisches Erlösungsmysterium* was supposedly the most potent factor in the religious life of the Near East, and where we have an almost continuous record of religious life from the early first century A. D., no trace of anything like the conceptions of Reitzenstein's hypothesis have appeared. Religious life at Dura followed the simple traditional patterns and was focused upon

(Concluded on Page 66)

A Complete Bible

EDGAR J. GOODSPEED

THE INVITATION of the editorial board of this journal to say something of the aims, problems and final realization of the task of translating the complete Bible, is one that I gratefully appreciate and welcome.

The great Bibles that so largely laid religious and literary foundations in the English speaking world were all complete Bibles. From Coverdale and Rogers to King James, whether Puritan or Anglican, they consisted of the Old Testament, the Apocrypha and the New Testament. Even before Luther made his momentous separation of the books not in the Hebrew canon into a group apart from the Old Testament, the Apocrypha had lain scattered through the Old Testament, in the Greek Bible of the early church and the Latin Vulgate that prevailed for a thousand years in Western Europe and Britain.

The first German version and the first English, that of Wyclif, included them, imbedded in the Old Testament. It was Luther who after completing his translation of the Hebrew scriptures, found the Apocrypha remaining and gathered them together by themselves, under the name they now bear. Yet it is difficult today to get a Bible of less than pulpit proportions that includes them, though for educational purposes such a Bible is indispensable. How we came to produce one, and in so doing found that we had made the first direct translation of the Complete Bible from the most ancient languages preserving it, into English, is a somewhat personal story.

At a meeting of the New Testament Club, at the University of Chicago, on February 24, 1920, I read a paper on modern versions of the New Testament, in which I fear I found a good deal of fault with such of them

as I knew. I should probably deal with them now with more restraint. Nothing was further from my mind than doing one myself. But in the discussion that followed, it was dryly suggested that I should attempt one and Mr. Crippen of the University Press, who was present, passed this suggestion on to Professor Laing, the editor of the Press. Dr. Laing immediately invited me to prepare such a version.

I well remember my first reaction to his letter. I knew that any translation of a masterpiece must be a failure, and fresh from my examination of previous efforts in that line I saw the impossibility of doing an entirely adequate job. My first impulse was to refuse. But on reflection, I thought better of it. The modern versions I knew best were the Twentieth Century, Weymouth and Moffatt,—each with its peculiar excellencies, but all the work of British hands. Yet if Deissmann was right about the strong colloquial strain in New Testament Greek,—and I was satisfied he was,—there might be room for a really American translation of the New Testament, made directly from the Greek into our terse vigorous native English. After all, there are more readers of the English Bible in America than in any other country in the world, and perhaps there was room for one translation made frankly in our distinctive vernacular, which does of course differ somewhat from that of Britain.

At any rate I determined to make the experiment and began with the easiest part, the Gospel of Mark. And that fall, when I was asked to appear in chapel, instead of offering some observations of my own, I read a few pages of my translation of Mark. I was struck with the fact that I had never in my life been listened to as I was on these

occasions. My constant effort was first to find out in each sentence just what the ancient writer meant to say, whether I agreed with him or not; and then to cast that meaning of his into such English as I would have used if I had thought of it myself.

I found that I could not work at the translation a whole day at a time, for after about fifteen verses I would find myself thinking, "Well, that's good enough; let it go at that," and when my mind began to flag in this way, it was wiser to stop at once. In short, I was not just making a revision, but a new translation. Of course when a book has been translated a hundred and fifty times in English, you cannot be original in every phrase and clause; there are not one hundred and fifty-one right ways to translate each sentence. But I strove for freshness of expression. As Bishop Williams once said in reading the scripture-lesson before his sermon from a modern version, "Perhaps the new words will make the old truth bite deeper!"

I wanted also to release the text from the burden of theological and controversial associations that had come to cling to so much of it. Not to deny such values, but to remind the reader that so much of that intellectual elaboration had not taken place when the New Testament was written. In short, I hoped to produce a version that would make upon our generation something of the impression the several books of the New Testament made upon their generation, when they were new.

When, after three years, the thing was done, and in the printers' hands, and Mrs. Goodspeed asked me how much of a circulation I expected the translation to have, I said quite sincerely that I would be satisfied if it reached a thousand copies a year. I was quite unprepared for the generous welcome it received. It was of course severely criticised by the newspapers, who quite mistakenly saw in it an attack upon the King James version, or an effort to degrade the

language of the Bible. These attitudes I found were really based on misconceptions of the history of the English Bible and the light the Greek papyri have thrown on the character of New Testament Greek, and when these misconceptions were removed, the newspaper hostility disappeared. Some papers in fact, led by the Chicago Evening Post, found room in their columns for a serial publication of the translation in the autumn of 1923, thus giving it a popular hearing such as no previous translation had enjoyed.

I was soon urged to follow the translation with one of the Old Testament, but while my first graduate enthusiasms were in that field, I had not kept abreast of such work enough to justify me in attempting a version of the Old Testament, and at my suggestion Mr. Laing turned the task over to my very able colleague, Dr. John M. P. Smith.

Professor Smith had been President Harper's favorite student, then his literary secretary and finally his successor, in the chair of Old Testament at Chicago. He organized a group of four highly expert Old Testament men, including himself, and distributed the books of the Old Testament among them. All four of these men were thoroughly trained in Semitic languages, and all were experienced teachers. Professor Gordon was at McGill, Professor Meek at Toronto, and Professor Waterman at Michigan.

They were therefore in a position to take full advantage of the great advances made in Semitic philology and in biblical archeology in the past seventy years. They were familiar with the new knowledge of Assyrian, Babylonian and Egyptian history and religion. Dr. Smith was himself especially solicitous for English literary values, and possessed a poise and balance of judgment most necessary in the work of translating not words but clauses and sentences. He and his colleagues were keenly alive to the serious textual problems relating to the Old Testa-

ment, and to the light the ancient versions, so much older than our Hebrew manuscripts, have to throw upon the text. It was safe to say the Old Testament was never more competently translated.

"The Old Testament, An American Translation" made its appearance in 1927, and four years later was republished in one volume with the New Testament. But this Bible still fell far short of the extent of the great historic Bibles of the Reformation, and for purposes of historical and literary study left much to be desired.

It was the suggestion of a college teacher of the Bible, Professor S. J. McCasland, then of Goucher College and now of the University of Virginia, that led me to undertake to translate the missing portion, the Apocrypha, from Greek into Modern English (1938). No one could have been more surprised than I was when in the midst of the undertaking I discovered that the Apocrypha as a whole had never been translated from Greek into English before. Individual books here and there have been, but in the main we have depended upon the successive revisions of Coverdale's translation of the German and Latin versions, (out of Douche and Latyn, as his title page put it) culminating in the English Revision of 1894, confessedly the part of their work to which the English Revisers gave the least attention, while the American revisers gave it no attention at all. Thomson (1808) and Brenton (1844), the American and English translators of the Greek Bible, omitted the books of the Apocrypha. Even Archdeacon Charles' stately volume does not retranslate them all.

Yet the Apocrypha formed part of all the historic Bibles of Christendom, from the Septuagint to King James. George Abbot, one of King James' revisers, when he was Archbishop of Canterbury proposed to imprison for a year anyone found guilty of printing the English Bible without them. They supply an important chapter in the his-

tory of Jewish religion. And they are indispensable to the understanding of the New Testament. It is they, not the Old Testament, that introduce us to its *dramatis personae*,—saints and sinners, angels and demons, Pharisees and Sadducees. They help us to understand the *atmosphere* of the New Testament—the pious duty of burying the bodies of slaughtered Jews, the story of the woman with seven husbands, the feast of Dedication.

But far more important, the Apocrypha offer us the key to some of the greatest *ideas* in the New Testament—Christology, immortality, resurrection. The approach to these is not through the Old Testament, it is through the Apocrypha.

How strange that so many modern discussions of the Pharisees are oblivious of the Apocrypha! The stern rebuke of the synagogue attitude toward one's enemies, in the Sermon on the Mount, so generally discounted by commentators, takes on a grim reality when read in the light of Judas' treatment of the dead Nicanor, on the last page of II Maccabees. And those who think that Jewish religion swept gradually and grandly up to Jesus have forgotten the Apocrypha.

Certainly for the broad cultural knowledge of the Bible that we should offer to college men and women, the Apocrypha are essential, not only for what they contribute to the understanding of the New Testament, but for themselves, and the times and ideas they immediately describe or reflect.

The influence of the Apocrypha upon literature, art and even music speaks for itself. It is through that influence, and not through the Bible, that most moderns first meet them,—in oratorios, picture galleries, poems, novels. And when, in happier days, our students again wander among the treasures of the Louvre and the Vatican, they should recognize them as old friends.

It is gratifying that two years ago (1938) the Cambridge press published a really complete edition of the King James version,

Preface, Apocrypha and all, in a convenient size. There was certainly a need of such an edition of King James, fit for students' use. But no part of the Bible has gained so much from modern manuscript discovery as the Apocrypha; Bensley's discovery of the seventy verses lost from II Esdras 7, published in 1875, has literally added to the text whole pages unknown to King James.

So in *The Complete Bible* (1939) we have sought to provide for students and general readers a translation of the entire Bible directly from the Hebrew and Greek, without abbreviation, based on the soundest texts available, taking full advantage of modern advances in philology, archeology and history, and printed in the modern style of quotation marks and paragraphs. My colleagues have recognized poetry wherever it appears and printed it as such, from Genesis to Malachi. This may seem a small matter, but it is only when we print the Gospel of John in this modern way, frankly paragraphing its conversation, that its affinity to the Greek dialogue becomes apparent.

The exclusion of the Bible from our public schools and from many state institutions of learning may distress us, but it may not be an unmixed evil. It makes the Bible stand alone in a kind of glorious *Index Expurgatorius*, and it presents to teachers of the Bible in the so-called private institutions

what amounts to a monopoly of the Bible, by government decree.

What an opportunity this offers us to present a historical view of the Bible, printed in the language our students use and understand, re clothed with all its original directness and dramatic power; seen to consist not of mechanical chapters and verses, such as its writers never dreamed of, but of powerful, coherent books, almost any one of which, in an intelligible modern version, can be read through at a sitting. It was for such use that the New Testament books certainly were written, and only in that way can their greatest values be realized. They are not mere masses of golden texts. Of course those who think they can get all the values out of the Bible by the use of scattered verses are much mistaken, for here as often in life, the Whole is so much more than the sum of all the Parts.

And the way to get the Bible back into the public schools, if we want to do it, is to make it so interesting, significant, dynamic and indispensable in private education that they will have to take it back. Meantime, it is ours and ours alone. We have at least the comfort of knowing that no public schools will teach it, and how much better this situation is than if the state had forbidden us to teach it and insisted on doing it all itself.

DISCUSSION

The Bible is News

Among the *new* books recommended for Christmas reading in the Chicago *Daily News* for Wednesday, December 4, 1940 was "The Bible," reviewed by Edgar J. Goodspeed. The review is reprinted here by permission of the author and the publishers of the *Daily News*.

The Bible—Oxford, Cambridge, London, New York, Chicago, 1940. Reviewed by DR. EDGAR J. GOODSPEED. (Author of the scholarly Goodspeed Translation of The Bible.)

The world of Dec. 25, 1940, presents a scene of war, invasion, captivity, massacre, famine, oppression and falsehood seldom, if ever, before equaled. Peaceful nations are invaded and subjugated without warning, ships full of children are sunk in stormy seas, inoffensive civilians are mangled and killed by invisible airplanes, treachery and conspiracy are in the highest places. Violence, lying, warfare and cruelty are not only practiced but openly avowed on both sides of the world as praiseworthy procedures on the part of great states. Civilization and international law have become a memory.

A book has now appeared, however, that asserts that this state of things is totally wrong, that a reverse system of values must prevail, that the experience of the human race has shown the futility of stealing anything you want, killing anyone who disagrees with you, and lying about your situation and your intentions. This book maintains that such courses inevitably end in ruin for those who follow them and misery for everybody else. It actually claims that justice, humanity and even mercy ought to be practiced by governments and nations, and even by individuals; that violence and cruelty simply call forth more violence and cruelty and that, absurd as it may seem, mutual consideration among men and nations is the only sane course to follow. Indeed, it goes further and says that people should be willing to sacrifice themselves and their own advantage, and even their rights, if it will in any way help or benefit their fellow men.

In short this book challenges in the most direct and outspoken way what is going on in the world, and the whole set of principles that underlie it.

Strangely enough, the writers of this book declare that the business of men upon this earth is not to enjoy, enrich, or aggrandize themselves, still less to attack, conquer, and subdue one another, but to do what it calls the will of God. By this it seems to mean helping one another to the best of one's ability, living humbly and unselfishly, and even sacrificing one's self for the common good.

Of course, nothing could possibly be further from the present trend in human relations, which is all for killing, mangling or impoverishing one another with all the aids that science and industry working night and day can supply.

If this book should become generally known it may have a pronounced effect upon world opinion and even upon politics. And this seems not improbable, as it is already being translated into English, German, Italian, Russian and Japanese. It may even challenge the popularity of current best sellers like "Mein Kampf" and "Das Kapital." While the law forbids its use in public schools, colleges and universities, where such books as "Kampf" and "Kapital" are freely taught, groups of people who are attracted by its ideology are being formed throughout the country, and to some extent even abroad, to look into its ideas and arouse interest in them.

We commend it as a suitable book for the Christmas season (the origin of which seems to be connected with it) when it may fittingly be given away or even retained and read. It will be found a refreshing change from the books of the current season, for though the historical situations it describes are often very much like our own times, the book's reactions to them differ from those that now prevail. But while the extreme novelty of its idea may repel some, most people will find that one of the book's most stimulating and attractive features. In fact we can unreservedly recommend this book to the jaded reader.

EDITORIAL

The Name of Our Association

The Association of which this *Journal* is the organ has been in existence for thirty-one years, practically a generation. Those years have seen many changes in the field of Biblical instruction in many colleges. The name, *National Association of Biblical Instructors* fitted the society better than it does today. In many institutions the curriculum has broadened in scope until the name under which we were christened no longer is as accurate as it once was, although it is still true, for which many of us are grateful, that in many colleges Biblical instruction is the backbone of the curriculum in the general field of religion. Those members who have attended the last few annual meetings of our Association have sensed the fact that our present name is not considered wholly adequate, but the committee of past Presidents was unable to find a substitute among proposed alternatives. The one that seemed best was *Association for the Study and Teaching of Religion*, a bit unwieldy perhaps, but broader than the present title and simplicity itself when we consider the burden that our name has to bear to be accurate as we launch into our thirty-second year of existence. If any member feels that our present title is less comprehensive than he desires will he please suggest a better one or vigorously support the status quo?

Far more important than our name, however, is an appreciation and understanding of our function. The committee referred to above discussed this problem at some length during the last annual meeting. As we see ourselves at present there was general consensus of opinion that our primary function is that we operate on the college level. This does not mean that we ignore the fact

that our membership includes instructors in the secondary school field (our President for 1941 is now working in this field) or ministers interested in our work, but simply that we are interested primarily in instruction in religion in the colleges. The changes in curricula, noted above, have broadened our field of operation considerably and increased our responsibility within this one area. It is our business, as we see it, to bring about a synthesis in the various branches of our field. To this end our annual meetings are varied, our *Journal* articles equally so, and it will be our aim to express in competent fashion the relatedness of the various disciplines that comprise the curriculum in any well-organized, broadly conceived, Department of Religion.

We would not ignore the admonition of the Apostle Paul not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think but to think soberly . . . and when we think soberly we find satisfaction in the conviction that as an Association we are becoming more scholarly. The quality of our programs is improving and also the quality of our *Journal* articles. We are fortunate in the participation, as well as in membership, of an increasing number of scholars whose former interest was mainly in the *Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis*. Again with Paul, we do not consider that we have already attained, and we solicit the criticism and suggestions of our members. This is *your* organization. Help those in positions of responsibility to do a better job.

MARY E. ANDREWS

(Editor's Note: The report of the Committee of Past Presidents deserves careful reading and thoughtful discussion. Members of the Association are invited to submit their comments for publication in the Discussion column of the *Journal*.)

BOOK REVIEWS

Primitive Monotheism?

From the Stone Age to Christianity. Monotheism and the Historical Process. By WILLIAM FOXWELL ALBRIGHT. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1940. 363 pages. \$2.50.

No reader of this journal needs to be reminded of the importance of everything which Professor Albright has to say on the subject of Near Eastern and Biblical studies. The title of the book suggests something of its enormous range, its almost encyclopedic comprehensiveness. The book contains six large chapters, each more or less a unit in itself. Many of the points raised throughout the discussion will remind one of previous contributions of Professor Albright, though in no sense is this book a re-hash of previous work. On the contrary, familiarity with Professor Albright's numerous articles and monographs aids one greatly in the understanding and appreciation of the book. Sometimes, where one has not mastered some specific discussion, he wishes that the writer had indeed expressed himself more fully. The book professes to have a historical and philosophical purpose, though, with the exception of Chapter II, "Toward an Organismic Philosophy of History," the philosophical or theological interest is not so well integrated with the rest of the extremely important and valuable discussion as one might wish.

The first chapter has at least a two-fold value: it provides a clear and important discussion of the methodology of Near Eastern historical studies, including a statement of the functions and province of the various fields (e. g. philology, linguistics, ceramics, art), and it gives a brief survey

of the history of Near Eastern studies. The brief section on the oral and written transmission of history is basic not only to an appreciation of Professor Albright's own attitude toward the documentary materials of the Old Testament, but also for any understanding of the relationship of oral tradition as such to its literary deposit. The Alt-Jirku-Albright school has made good use of the *Gattungsforschung* in its investigations, though Professor Albright is critical of the excesses to which some scholars have gone in recent years in denying historicity to narratives where the aetiological motif is pronounced. The divergences between J and E in the Pentateuch are not to be considered as "average variation," i. e. as typical of the differences between documents, but rather as maximum variation." They really represent variations of an original single epic.

So far as I am aware, it is only recently that Professor Albright has shown an interest in the philosophy of history. After a well-directed thrust against the dangers of historicism (pp. 49f.), he gives a brief survey of tendencies in the philosophy of history during the past century. He has little more than disdain for Spengler and even Marx; though he has little sympathy, indeed, with the whole Hegelian school, he recognizes the great importance of the work of F. C. Baur in New Testament theology and of Julius Wellhausen in the Old Testament. One of the most characteristic features of Albright's work, of course, has been his consistent criticism of the Wellhausen school. Very interesting is the evaluation of Toynbee's monumental work on *A Study of History* (pp. 60-65) and Sorokin's volumes on *Social and Cultural*

Dynamics (pp. 66-70). The closing pages of this chapter are extremely valuable as a statement of Albright's own position. He sees the history of Israelite and Jewish religion from Moses to Jesus as "the pinnacle of biological evolution as represented in *Homo Sapiens*." An organismic philosophy is the "only proper way in which to approach the problem of the relation of historical contexts to one another." But Professor Albright contents himself with the perspective of but one culture unity: "By this we mean a geographically and chronologically limited horizon, in which there is real homogeneity about the aspect of any element or factor, which ceases as soon as we cross these boundaries of time and space."

The third chapter undertakes to give a general sketch of the cultural and religious development of the Ancient Near East from the earliest times to about 1600 B. C. It is unfortunately impossible to summarize this extremely important chapter, since it provides so admirably the hinterland of the Bible. Dynamistic features of primitive religion, so much emphasized by A. Bertholet and Karl Beth, the discussion of the "high" gods in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Syria, and the emergence of the cult symbolism and mythology of the fertility gods all receive their appropriate treatment.

The remaining chapters are so many-sided in their interest for students of Hebrew-Christian religion that no attempt at summary will be made. Rather we shall content ourselves with a few general observations evoked from a perusal of these chapters. Most notable, perhaps, is Professor Albright's championing of a Mosaic monotheism. He feels that modern Old Testament study has been too much influenced by Wellhausen's evolutionary conceptions. He does not present his own case in any detail in this book, but what he writes merits the careful consideration of scholars. Without attempting to meet the argument here, I may raise several questions which arise in

my mind. Does Professor Albright do sufficient justice to the distinction between monotheism and henotheism (in the original meaning of that much abused term)? Is not Professor Albright's contention influenced by his own view as to the kind of historicity the documents present? If the Exodus narratives are substantially historically accurate as they stand, as I understand Professor Albright to mean, then one might quarrel with his historico-critical judgments. Moreover, is there not an unusually large number of statements which do not go beyond probability at the most? Does Professor Albright allow sufficiently for obvious Oriental exaggeration in such documents as prayers and liturgies? Finally, but certainly not least, does not the author discount the vast number of passages in the Old Testament to be found in any handbook on Israel's religion which clearly indicate a monolatrous, perhaps, but certainly not a monotheistic, stage of development?

It is in many ways heartening to have a scholar defend with such power and skill the reliability of the Old Testament records, but one cannot resist the feeling that sufficient justice has not been done the actual reasoning which leads to a more critical view of the materials. We all recognize today that the Priestly Code has its ultimate origins deep in antiquity, and we may be impressed, as the reviewer is, with Albright's defence of the patriarchal narratives. But are not the elements of diversity greater than Albright thinks? Compare e. g. the Deuteronomistic Code with the parallel materials of the Covenant Code. Again, one may feel the force of Albright's criticism of those who stress the unreliability of the aetiological narratives of the Book of Joshua, but does it do justice to the kind of evidence, geographical, tribal, and cultic, of Alt's notable essay on *Joshua* in *Werden und Wesen des Alten Testaments*? Interestingly enough, one of the few passages which Albright actually cites is Joshua 10 (p. 209), which, as

Alt points out, is distinctive in several important respects, and unlike the preceding aetiological stories. It is possible that Professor Albright's unpublished materials may give greater support to the historicity of Ezra and the Chronicler, but there is nothing in his present discussion which meets Torrey's well-known view of the "exile" and its subsequent literary development.

There are almost innumerable other matters which merit discussion: the date of the Exodus in 1290 B. C., the completion of the Pentateuch in 522 B. C., the Canaanite character of the Hyksos, the true meaning of *pahad* in Gen. 31:42, 53, Egyptian influences upon Moses and his successors, the meaning of *nabhi*, the Tabernacle, the Aramean origins of the Hebrews, the excellent use made of the Mari inscriptions, the discussion of the Logos concept and the Memra, the nature of the period after 626 B. C., the characterization of Second Isaiah's thought in relation to the religion of Moses, and the non-volcanic character of Sinai. These are but a few among many matters which will arouse the interest of all students of the Bible.

From the Stone Age to Christianity is slow but rewarding reading. There is not a page which does not reveal the erudition and insight of a great scholar. Moreover, the book is informed with a religious spirit. The appreciation of the great historic Hebrew and Christian affirmations, the acute criticism of Breasted's humanistic philosophy of evolution, and the magnificent statement on suffering (p. 302) enrich a book that is nothing less than an event in modern Biblical scholarship.

JAMES MUILENBURG

Pacific School of Religion

Jesus

The Search for the Real Jesus. By CHES-
TER CHARLTON MCCOWN. New York:
Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940. xviii
+ 338 pages. \$2.50.

"Who do men say that I am?" A century of answers to this question constitutes the content of Dr. McCown's book. Has it been a century of progress? "While scholars too seldom change their minds after they have published an opinion," writes Dr. McCown, "still progress is made at least from generation to generation. Some questions are settled, even though youthful scholars in their ignorance of the work of the past do not know it and old scholars refuse to acknowledge it." "Even if no Elysium is in sight, the search for the social Jesus need not be abandoned. Progress has been made in the past: further progress is possible in the future." Yet he opens the next to the last chapter in his book as follows: "The nineteenth century ended with the destruction of its characteristic 'liberal' portrait of Jesus. It would appear that after nearly forty years, the twentieth-century has discovered none at all of its own. The light-hearted wanderings of mind to which humanity is eternally subject and the ponderous inertia which delays human progress leave the major problems still unsolved. Indeed a large majority of Christians do not know such problems exist. Even in the most progressive and most literate countries the vast proportion of Christian people have not allowed science to infect their religious ideas. They have one foot in the fifteenth, the other in the twentieth century—a posture not conducive to progress. Worst of all the greater part of the writers who essay to settle the practical problems of civilization and the church still write in blissful ignorance of all principles of Synoptic criticism and historical interpretation. Whether permanent steps in advance have been taken seems at times most uncertain. The evidence is conflicting."

Dr. McCown organizes his material in five parts. Part I is entitled "The Search for the Historical Point of View." The search began with Strauss' *Life of Jesus Critically Examined*, 1835-6, "a product and

a revelation of the confused thinking of his times," whose value lay in the subsequent studies it provoked. Part II is entitled "A False Start, Led by Philosophy Instead of Science." It was a false start because Strauss, dominated by Hegelian philosophy, looked at the story of Jesus from the philosopher's viewpoint, concerned more with a reconstruction of Christian doctrine than with an historical account of Jesus, which resulted in obscuring the historical figure of Jesus. To the left the development was toward the Christ-myth point of view. To the right Bauer and the Tübingen school followed the path of historical criticism and Fichtean-Hegelian dialectic to reach a Jesus who was an idea, not a living person.

Part III, "The Search for Critical Methods of Historical Study," comprises two chapters. One of these, "Historical Science and Gospel Criticism," is one of the ablest chapters in the book. For the author a right conception of what history really is is basic to the search for the real Jesus, because the place of Jesus in history is all important. "Politics, economics, religion: around these three mutually interwoven elements in the social structure revolve the greatest problems of history. If those events may be defined as historical which exercise an influence beyond the moment of their happening, then certainly Jesus and the beginnings of Christianity deserve to be reckoned, not merely the greatest fact in the history of religion, but one of the greatest in all history. Surely no other single person has so deeply and so widely affected all of the structure of society as Jesus."

Part IV, entitled "The Search for Trustworthy Sources," devotes a chapter to the Fourth Gospel, one to the Synoptic Problem, and one to "Oral Tradition, Its Forms and Life Situations." The author finds that "no biography of Jesus and no geographical or chronological outline of his ministry are possible. But there is sufficient authentic material for portraying his character and

for determining the main outlines of his ethics and religion."

Part V deals with "The Search for an Historical Interpretation." A chapter is devoted to the "liberal" accounts of Jesus, one to the eschatological, and one to "The Search for a Social Jesus." There follows a chapter on "The Life of Jesus in the Twentieth Century." "At the beginning of the twentieth century Gospel criticism had destroyed both the orthodox and the liberal Jesus. It had discovered none for itself. More than a third of the century has gone and the situation is worse rather than better. The same confusion and anarchy which reign in economic, political, and international affairs dominates this sphere also. Uncertainty as to dependable data from the sources is matched by uncertainty as to the description of Jesus' attitudes and their re-interpretations for today. Two crucial problems of interpretation, that of eschatology and the 'social gospel,' remain still unsettled in the minds of many."

The last chapter is on "Jesus and the Problem of History." The chief problem is that of the nature of history. "A satisfactory view must involve a synthesis of ideas based on scientific, philosophical, social, and religious data, not theologically but realistically viewed. In such a view, based, not on theory or dogma, but on actual experience, history will be accepted as God's education of the human race, and Jesus, because of his unique insights into human values, will be the supreme Teacher, since his words, his life, and his death give meaning to history in all its complexities and contradictions."

Each one of the five parts of the book is preceded by a summary of the argument of that part chapter by chapter, a most valuable equipment, for by it one can speedily recapture the thread of the author's reasoning when one takes up the book again to read at any point. An ample bibliography and a very complete index make the book a

genuinely useful tool for the student of that phase of the history of New Testament criticism which deals with the Gospels. It is devoutly to be hoped that this study may stimulate future authors to give us more of the real Jesus.

ELMER W. K. MOULD

Elmira College

Anno Domini. By KENNETH SCOTT LATOURETTE. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1940. xv+248 pages. \$2.50.

Under a particularly apt title the author of *A History of the Expansion of Christianity* here moves into the combined fields of history and theology. In the historic aspect of this book there is but a condensation of the earlier work. The same frame-work upon which the vast movement of the Church's expansion was there set forth serves here for the philosopher-theologian of history to meditate upon the truth and importance of Jesus and the Church for human history. It is excellently done. The able and powerful attack of modern pagan statecraft and philosophy is the occasion for the Christian once again to examine the validity of the faith. The fact that the Christian holds Jesus of such importance as to date history so that it falls in a form "*Before Christ*" and "*After Christ*" (hence, *Anno Domini*), sets off the train of thought. Does the influence of Jesus justify this? Professor Latourette establishes four criteria for the study and then applies them to the Church in his well known chronological pattern for its history. The criteria are: (1) geographic extension, (2) new religious movements attributable to Jesus, (3) the effect of Jesus upon various phases of human culture, and (4) the extent to which individuals have been shaped by the inward religious experience which arises through Jesus. These are matched against the centuries, the high and low points of Christianity's historic advance are surveyed, and the conclusion is

on the affirmative and positive aspect of the centrality of Jesus. Jesus has been and is of such paramount importance in the long development of the race in its relationship to the Good and in its understanding of God that he rightly maintains his place in the center of historic time and movement. The book is thoughtful and able.

EDWIN P. BOOTH

Boston University School of Theology

The World's Need of Christ. By CHARLES A. ELLWOOD. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press. 1940. 237 pages. \$2.00.

Professor Ellwood's book, which may almost be described as a sociological sermon, is written in the spirit of his quotation from John Wesley, "I am a man sent of God to persuade men to put Christ at the center of their relationships" (p. 212). In the first chapter the author summons men of our "Epicurean or sensate" civilization now gravely sick of hostile conflict and intellectual and moral confusion from a sceptical or partial neglect of Christ to a modern revival or imitation of Christ's spirit which "has been the spiritually building factor in our civilization" (p. 52). In the four following chapters he shows the appalling neglect of Christ in science and philosophy, in religion and church, in business and industry and in politics and international relations. In a final chapter he gives hope for a Christian reconstruction which can be attained through the church by a complete devotion to spiritual values, to the law of love and to the leadership of Christ. An extended appendix presents the world's need of religious unity.

This book is a stirring call to have faith in Christ and his teachings with special attention to the social aspects. There is a forthright analysis of the moral weakness of our dehumanized society when "history

has become again synonymous with homicide" (p. 30). There is a comprehensive grasp upon our common affairs combined with many penetrating comments on our largely pagan civilization. "In order to get rid of war, the first thing to do is to get rid of that kind of peace which conceals warlike attitudes" (p. 156). "Nationalism is an outgrowth of tribalism" (p. 164). "Perhaps it might even pay modern capitalism to become radically Christian" (p. 142). "The mass of religious people remain afraid of knowledge. . . . Religious leaders generally lack insight into human nature and human relations" (p. 78).

But there are definite limitations in this book. Though concrete measures to implement Christian ideals are disclaimed as beyond the author's purpose, the result is a strong impression of need but also a sense of bafflement in actual meeting of the need. It is hardly realistic to suggest that the privileged few will be persuaded to distribute their goods voluntarily. It is an oversimplification to insist that the church in order to become a mighty power needs "only to put Christ at the head and adopt his program" (p. 197). This type of appeal, as Professor Hocking has pointed out "conjoins indubitable soundness with an almost perfect economy of thought." The one chapter on reconstruction is largely repetitious variations of three fundamental elements.

In ranging so wide a field as the "world" some latitude must be allowed but the discussion of religion and church appears especially vulnerable. Is it childlike to turn to God in a crisis and does this make one otherworldly? Was Jesus the first to teach that the service of God is in the service of man? The Hebrew prophets provide negative answers. The intrinsic values of worship are not recognized in the claim that "worship has no justification except as a spiritual preparation for action" (p. 204). Are the "teachings of Christ ignored in most Christian teachings and preaching" (p. 92)? Has

research shown that Jehovah is a God of war throughout the Old Testament, Ruth excepted (p. 94)? Did Paul make the mistake of asceticism and withdrawal from the world (p. 49)? If the Protestant Reformation "did not aim to reinstate the teachings of Christ" (p. 96), why should Professor Moehlman be commended for his position that "original Protestantism desired to return to Jesus" (p. 191)? Which is the "first" step for the church, a return to the leadership of Christ or a recognition of intruding pagan elements and reinstatement of Christ's teachings or a teaching that spiritual values are the only significant realities (pp. 178, 185, 195)?

Of minor concern may be the comment that in view of the contents the title might more accurately read "The Western World's Need Of Christ." Moreover the people who need most to read this book probably will not look past the title.

DWIGHT MARION BECK

Syracuse University

The Creed of Christ. An Interpretation of the Lord's Prayer. By GERALD HEARD. New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1940. 169 pages. \$2.00.

The Creed of Christ consists of five addresses given at the Mount Hollywood Congregational Church at the invitation of Rev. Allan A. Hunter, with an introductory chapter. The Lord's Prayer (readers may differ on the appropriateness of calling it a "creed") is held to be central to the gospel teachings since even the Beatitudes depend upon it. "It is the root from which the action ordered by the Sermon must spring;" without it the Sermon remains "a magnificent but impossible demand" (p. 6).

Admirers of Gerald Heard's ability to bring light simultaneously from western science and far-eastern religion to bear upon the nature of Reality and man's way of finding union with it have sometimes raised the

question, "But what of our own religion?" Granting that, except for a few mystics and mystical groups, historic Christianity has failed, that all its forms of piety are found wanting, is there nothing at its center which is more important to us, with more saving power and simplicity, than the complex religions of the East can give? In short, what does he think of Christ? In this book we find an answer.

No amount of higher criticism can tell us what He was, but "it is a fact of historical importance that many of the authentic saints have repeatedly asserted . . . as an obvious fact that Christ was far higher above them than they are above us." (p. 14). Christ was "a new birth, a new species," an emergent appearing in order that man might glimpse his "task to be reborn so as to become of that species" (p. 15). It is unwise for us, judging from ordinary humanity, to attempt to define the limits of the powers and vision of such a man. Rather we need to look for the way to follow him—and that way is prayer. Prayer is not mere preparation for action but is action, the activity which "brings the air of eternity into time" and creates the atmosphere in which our immortal nature can be awakened and we be transformed (p. 25). The verbal prayer Jesus gave is "the seminal nucleus of a true religion" (p. 29).

The five chapters which follow are meditations on the five petitions which compose the prayer in its briefest form. Under "Hallowed be Thy Name" there is new and challenging treatment of psychologists' criticisms of prayer (p. 35 ff). This petition is the essential, initial submission to the reality of God, a guard against our unbelief, especially necessary as against our modern tendency to see Him as nothing but the Ideal, "a water tank of social service," "the dream of gentle lovingness . . . alien from the actual world" (p. 50). It is the acknowledgment of a Reality supreme and terrible. "What is the world doing today,

what is its agony, but its meeting with Reality and its struggle to deny that Reality is confronting it" (p. 58)?

In "Thy Kingdom Come" again the accent is on God's reality. Nothing is said of *our* part in bringing in the Kingdom—have we nothing to do with it? Only on condition that we know in some sense what the Kingdom is, that it is "as in heaven," and recognize our complete lack of the power that could make it real. By our incessant busyness and wishful thinking we are actually thwarting not forwarding it. We need to undo our deluded selves, to enter seriously upon the training and the struggle needed to become truly conscious of Reality.

"Give us this day the Bread of the Coming Day." Our author stresses the uncertainty of the word too thoughtlessly translated "daily," and agrees with the old sacramentalists that it cannot mean literal bread or economic salvation but the gift of grace, the exposure to the Light which nourishes the soul.

Forgiveness can be understood only if we realize that "we are actually members one of another and so must be saved and in turn save; that being saved means being extracted out of 'a body of death' . . . from which . . . we must emerge into another condition of being, a true evolutionary advance" (p. 121). To the extent that we are forgiven, freed from the illusion of our separate egotism, we can forgive. There are new depths and reaches of forgiveness on each level of spiritual experience. We, the "good people," are forgiven only slightly and our forgiveness of others amounts to very little. On higher levels forgiveness can become more radically redemptive; it requires a Son of God to redeem dictatorships.

"Deliver us from evil" leads to consideration of the problem of evil and its relation to time. "Evil is no surface thing of unfortunate circumstances. It is in our-

selves, our nature" (p. 150). Intellectual explanation of evil is futile; we need to start with knowledge of ourselves, to see the critical danger behind our complacency, the backward pull of our nature which tempts us to fall asleep in the snow, makes it easier to die than to live.

As we would expect from Gerald Heard, the thought is enriched by illustrations from both the natural sciences and the mystical tradition. But this book unlike its predecessors centers down on a simple and fundamental theme and gives the impression of a unified and clear message for our time.

ERMINIE HUNTRESS

Pendle Hill

Christianity

A Short History of Christianity. Edited by ARCHIBALD G. BAKER. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1940. vi. + 279 pages. \$2.00.

Six members of the Faculty of the University of Chicago Divinity School have collaborated to produce a condensed account of the origin and development of the Christian Church. With extraordinary economy of words and trenchant clarity of interpretation, the nineteen hundred years of Christendom have been set down within the compact confines of a two hundred and sixty-four page text.

The work falls into eight main sections, each of which is conveniently divided into four parts. The first two sections, covering the rise of Christianity and its role in the period of Rome's fall, are treated by Massey H. Shepherd, Jr. John T. McNeill likewise writes two sections on Christianity in Medieval Europe and in the Reformation Era. A chapter upon Eastern Orthodoxy is contributed by Matthew Spinka, and this is succeeded by Winfred E. Garrison's section on Christianity in Modern Europe. An account of church history in the Americas comes from the pen of William W. Sweet,

and the book is rounded out by a chapter on modern missions, written by Archibald G. Baker, who is also the editor of the volume.

This does not purport to be an encyclopedic handbook, for it includes no maps nor chronological charts. Rather is it a readable outline designed to enable a mature reader to grasp the main trends in the various epochs of Christendom's life. Occasionally one has the feeling that he is reading a whole series of topic sentences, each of which must stimulate the reader to hunt out in reference works the illustrative material necessary to give the complete picture.

Christianity is throughout presented in close relationship to the culture or society in which it functions. One lays down the book with a better understanding of the Church's contributions to education and its varied relationships with secular interests: the State and economic problems. One wishes that the chapter on Eastern Orthodoxy were not so placed as to interrupt the continuity of European church development. This chapter might more naturally follow after the treatment of the Roman period, when its lucid analysis of doctrinal and political differences between east and west would add clarification to the understanding of the medieval period. Incidentally one might recommend purchase of this high calibre book simply because of the skill with which Dr. Spinka tells the oft-neglected story of Eastern Christendom.

HENRY E. ALLEN

Lafayette College

Christian Ethics in History and Modern Life. By ALBAN G. WIDGERY. New York: Round Table Press, (1940), vii + 318 pages. \$2.50.

It is not often in the life of a book reviewer that he can experience something of the thrill which Keats so aptly describes

in his poem. "On First Looking Into Chapman's Homer," when "a new planet swam into his ken." Hence when this does happen it is a time for rejoicing. One feels after reading this volume by Widgery that he ought to call upon all and sundry to join him in rejoicing. These are the words of great praise, but certainly not praise undeserved.

The author, formerly Stanton lecturer in Philosophy of Religion at the University of Cambridge is now Professor of Philosophy at Duke University, much to the loss of England and the gain of America. This book is an elaboration of a course of lectures delivered on the Stanton foundation at Cambridge.

Within the compass of a little over three hundred pages Dr. Widgery has faced the problem of giving "a scholarly presentation of Christian ethics with some consideration of the implications for modern life" (p. vii). The first four chapters deal with Christian ethics from the time of the gospels on thru the period of the expansion of Christianity in the Graeco-Roman world, during the Middle Ages, thru the time of the Renaissance and the Protestant reformation to the present. Yet these chapters are not meant to be history; rather, historical material is introduced in order to show the nature and the details of Christian ethics from classical examples and presentations in Christian history.

The last four chapters deal with such current issues as the Christian ethics of sex and the family, politics, economics, and human culture. Here is borne out the truth of the author's contention that "a modern conception of Christian ethics, by the tests of experience and of critical philosophical reflection, can claim to be not merely the equal of, but superior to, any other form of ethics with which it can be compared" (p. viii).

Good as is the content of the book, scholarly in approach, yet reasonable and readable, Dr. Widgery has done all scholars a real service in the documentation of this volume.

Anyone who has studied in this field knows something of the vastness of the literature and the value of one who can from that vast plethora of sources suggest those which are illustrative. Here one will find such guidance for in the twenty pages of notes which appear at the end of the volume are gathered sources which present the most usable body of reference material that this reviewer has yet seen in this field.

To the religious book club must be given due credit for sponsoring such a worthy volume. Teachers of New Testament and church history will find it most helpful in the provision of collateral readings.

IVAN GEROULD GRIMSHAW

*American International College,
Springfield, Mass.*

England Before and After Wesley. By J. WESLEY BREADY. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1940. 470 pages with illustrations in gravure. \$3.50.

The term democracy has among English-speaking peoples gradually assumed a wider meaning. It is no longer merely a political term conveying the idea of representative government; and again no longer merely carrying with it the significance of equal rights and privileges in the social and economic spheres; but it has become a religious term standing for the brotherhood of man on the basis of the fatherhood of God. Some of the credit for the broadening out of the term, now so constantly used, it may be remarked in passing, belongs to the rise of the modern study and instruction of the Bible as history and literature as well as religion with its emphasis upon the social as well as religious teachings of the prophets and Jesus Christ.

It is this broad and vital conception of the term that underlies the treatment of Bready's *England Before and After Wesley*, under review, which makes its appeal, time-

ly and urgent, to all who want to think and work in terms of real democracy.

The three great lines of thought into which the book falls are the social, economic, moral and religious conditions in England in the period immediately preceding the Wesleyan revival; the awakening of John Wesley viewed as the rise of a social, economic, moral and religious force; and the after effect of the Wesleyan movement upon society down to our time along the same comprehensive lines. Thus while the subject in hand is religious, religion is not regarded in a narrow sense, but as embracing all the essential phases of life and society.

It is an extremely dark picture of England that at first meets us. It seems hardly believable that the England which we now look upon as a fair model of decency could ever have been, and so recently, so wicked. But the author documents fully his description of English slave-trading; bubble-finance; corrupt politics and graft; abominable judicial courts and prisons; maltreatment of children, farmed out to be left starving by the hundreds; gambling as a national obsession; gin-drinking, bull-baiting and cock-fighting; immorality as a sport; ignorance, superstition and quackery; all practiced by gentleman and commoner, high and low.

Wesley's conversion, although a religious experience, is treated with a new approach as a social phenomenon. It was the awakening of a prophet, the precursor of the modern application of religion to social and economic life, aptly illustrated by the quotation:

"I knew that Christ had given me birth
To brother all the souls on earth."

Consequently, it is pointed out repeatedly that Wesley said that Christianity is essentially a social religion; to turn it into a solitary religion is indeed to destroy it;

and again that the gospel of Christ knows no religion but *social*, and no holiness but *social holiness*. Wesley's mission was to the common people; and he would not be held back from them by the violence of stone-throwing and clubbing which he at first received from them. In no less degree than Karl Marx, the apostle of a godless communism, Wesley was interested in the working people. He believed in the dignity of labor and that the poor were exploited; and that social justice to the worker was the foundation of any true society. But unlike Marx, Wesley believed that men's first step toward emancipation was to find their souls by entering into communion with the spiritual world, and having found social justice *within* them, they could build it up in society. Brotherhood meant to Marx comradeship in self-interest and self-defense, wreaking vengeance upon hated exploiter; to Wesley it meant spiritual affinity, social fellowship which in love and cooperation would ultimately build up mankind.

The third part of the work recounts the effects of the Wesleyan movement upon modern society—the fruits of the faith. Among the effects discussed are the abolition of slavery; the foundations of popular education; the humanizing of the prison system; the reform of the penal code; the widening out of the content of brotherhood as manifest in the origin of foreign missions; the emancipation of industrialism; the influence of religion upon British trade unionism; illustrated, for instance, by Lawson who maintains that the Evangelical Revival saturated the industrial masses with a passion for a better life, personal, mental, moral and social; and that the Chapel was their first social center where they drew together, found strength in their weakness and expressed to each other their hidden thoughts and needs; the British hospital system, the only major hospital system in the world supported almost exclusively by

freewill gifts; the society of prevention of cruelty to animals, dealing with the habits and rights of, or man's duties toward, the beast and bird world; the City Missions with their welfare work in the slums; and the Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. movement.

The work is *Gesta Christi*, the justification of the Christian faith, as illustrated by Methodism, and seen in its works, brought up to date. In spite of heavy documentation at the bottom of each page, it is full of the most stirring human interest and reads like a novel, to which the illustrations add the touch of living reality. The mission of this work will begin and not end with its first reading.

ISMAR J. PERITZ

Wolcott, N. Y.

Religion, Theology and Philosophy

What We Mean By Religion. By WILLARD L. SPERRY. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1940. 171 pages. \$1.75.

These five lectures by Dean Sperry constituted the first of an annual series of lectures on religion to be given at Florida Southern College. The titles of the several chapters,—Religion, Faith, Prayer, Morals, God,—indicate the ground covered by the book and also suggest the directness that characterizes the discussion.

At the outset the author disclaims any intention of defining these terms; he seeks rather to illustrate them by description. To recur to the distinction drawn by Professor Dewey, he describes 'the religious' rather than 'religion.' The religious man "believes that he belongs to some thing or some one other than himself," to something greater, better, and stronger than himself. This belief is not fully satisfied with the social reference of humanism but demands a cosmic reference, "some deep and enduring correspondence between man and

his universe." In comparing faith and knowledge, popular thought ascribes a certainty and finality to scientific knowledge that scientists and philosophers would hardly claim. Science does not presume to invade the domain of faith, which is a quest for values and a passing of values. The religious man is a spiritual adventurer engaged in vindicating in experience the articles of his faith. Much of the difficulty with the idea of prayer lies in the emphasis on prayer as petition, which tends to reduce prayer to the level of magic as a means of compelling God to do our will. Prayer is rather a companionship of minds. In prayer so conceived the effort is to find and to do God's will. Morality is the manward side of religion. We look in vain in the Bible for ready-made solutions for the moral problems of today. The ethic of Jesus is an ideal ethic, but it is also, as Professor Whitehead has said, itself an instrument of progress toward the ideal. The love that the New Testament enjoins is 'a steady set of the will' for the welfare of others. The final lecture deals with belief in God. Frankly admitting with many earnest Christians that belief in God is not easy, the writer yet holds that the first sentence of the creed is basic for all the rest. Cosmological and teleological arguments have less force than our conviction of the rationality of the universe. Our thinking presupposes a Thinker as the ground of the cosmic order. As to the dilemma between the goodness of God and his omnipotence, it is more important to hold to his goodness than to assert his omnipotence in unguarded terms. Much of the evil in the world, however, is a price for human freedom, and much may be traced directly to human sources.

The whole discussion is kept close to experience. It recognizes difficulties in theory, but it never loses sight of the actual. It takes full account of modern attitudes of mind and modern progress in science,

but it does not surrender the reality of religious faith to a onesided appraisal of the facts of human life. Here and there the argument is illuminated by apt quotation, as of the prayer of the Breton fisherman: "O God, thy sea is so great, and my boat is so small." In content and in form of presentation the lectures were well adapted to the serious undergraduate mind and to the interested lay public. In printed form they will appeal to a wider circle of ministers and laymen and will be fruitful in suggesting to teachers of religion new methods of approach to familiar themes.

JOHN PITT DEANE

Beloit College

Wisdom and Folly in Religion. By JOSEPH HAROUTUNIAN. (With an Introduction by H. RICHARD NIEBUHR). New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940. 174 pages. \$2.00.

The author of this volume is Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at The Presbyterian Seminary, Chicago. He was formerly Assistant Professor of Biblical History at Wellesley College. The present volume is devoted to the thesis that the contemporary must find his religious satisfaction in Biblical religion mediated through the Protestant Reformer. This idea permeates the three sections of the book: First, "God Alone is God;" second, "On the Protestant Religion;" third, "On the Problem of Righteousness." Contemporary religion is condemned because it affirms the goodness and self-sufficiency of man, and because of its moral tendencies. The latter subordinates the religious interest of man to his moral interests, and the former subordinates God to man. Thus religion must be religious, and theocentric, if it is to meet Professor Haroutunian's approval.

The solution of the contemporary problem is comparatively simple, not according to the express statement of the author but ac-

cording to his reiterated word: *Back to the Bible through the Reformers!* This will surprise none who read his article on "Recent Theology and the Biblical Mind," (*Journal of Bible and Religion*, Feb. 1940). There, as here, he pled for a return to the Bible; here, however, he would view the Bible through the doctrines of the sixteenth century reformers. Why the twentieth century church should return to the Bible, or to the reformers, for the solution of their contemporary problems remains a mystery to this reader of Professor Haroutunian's work. Of course he insists, vehemently, that we should do so, but other voices are just as raucous in their insistence that we should not. Presumably, we should return to the sixteenth century because the Reformers understood God, the Bible, and man better than any twentieth century thinker could. That, however, is an exceedingly debatable assumption. The logic of this volume leaves much to be desired. Beyond emphatic assertions and bitter denunciations, there is little which resembles cogent argument or relevant fact. One who believes that assertions should be supported by 'doxic' facts, that is, things, events, and behaviors; and that logic should consist in the use of the best available forms of reasoning, will find little of interest in this volume. One who enjoys biting sarcasm and bitter attack (symptoms of a sinful age, according to the author, see pp. 119 f.), will enjoy this work.

There are of course valuable emphases in the book. There is the reiterated insistence that we dare not blind ourselves to the "tragic sense of life," as Miguel de Unamuno has so long insisted we have; there is a frank recognition of the place of frustration in life, but with it the insistence that sin is perhaps its basic cause; there is an affirmation that the past may have some values even for the contemporary. It is pertinent and timely to emphasize these things, for they tend to be overlooked. It is

quite inexcusable however, from the point of view of this reviewer, to find the source of some of these in the sinfulness of man, and the explanation and answer to all of them in the Reformers' understanding of Biblical ideas. Going back to the past for the solution of every problem is becoming too prevalent an habit. Perhaps its attractiveness lies in its simplicity: Let the Bible answer the hard questions. It should be obvious to the educated of today, at least, that the problems of an age must be solved by the thought of that age, and by no other. Amos, Isaiah, and Jeremiah thought their laborious ways to partial solutions, at least, of the problems of their day; so also did Jesus, Paul, and the early Christians; and so also did the Reformers whom Haroutunian respects so deeply. After our author has laid bare the wounds of this day, perhaps he should do more than leave them raw. The contemporary theologian must do more than condemn; he must also construct. And, let it be emphasized, construction does not consist in "passing the buck" to any past age, no matter how significant it may have been. Constructive thinking consists in analyzing the problem, and finding in the problem situation many, if not all, of the elements required for its solution. It is at this point that *Wisdom and Folly in Religion* is weakest.

This volume, with its emphasis upon God and theocentric religion will find a welcome in many parts of this land. God and God alone is exalted chapter after chapter. One curious thing emerged, however, in the reading of the book. The God whom the author exalts so highly is never once defined! Presumably, it is the God of the Protestant Reformers whom he exalts, but it might have been courteous to readers to state it specifically.

WILLIAM H. BERNHARDT

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The Problem of Religious Knowledge. By DOUGLAS CLYDE MACINTOSH. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1940. xvi + 390 pages. \$3.50.

Professor D. C. Macintosh, hero of a great fight for liberty of conscience in America, is one of the most highly respected and influential of American philosophers of religion. He has now presented us with the crown of his life-work in *The Problem of Religious Knowledge*, as a sequel to his earlier *The Problem of Knowledge*. This new book is a veritable *magnum opus*. Attractively printed and bound by Harpers, it is a product of thorough scholarship and is a monument of American learning. It is a much-needed rebuke to those writers who scatter their pages with allusions to ideas and thinkers without giving any exact reference to the sources of their information. All of Professor Macintosh's statements are documented in a workmanlike style, usually in the body of the text. Every statement he makes about others can be checked. This alone adds immensely to its value. Such scholarship may make hard reading; it certainly makes hard writing; but it is the way to contribute solidly to the growth of a discipline, unless one is writing a creative masterpiece like the *Critique of Pure Reason*.

The Problem of Religious Knowledge (hereafter referred to as PRK) is intended both as an encyclopaedia of modern thought on its subject and also as a systematic and critical presentation of the author's own views. Each of these aims is valuable, and both are well achieved; yet each to some extent weakens the other. Objective and learned as Professor Macintosh is, still even he cannot fail to be guided somewhat, in the selection and treatment of the ideas he is to expound, by his critical and systematic aim. On the other hand, the need of expounding the views of others prevents his own view from coming to the full and

adequate expression one would desire. Yet these remarks should not deter anyone from using the book. It is, in fact, indispensable both as a manual of the strife of systems and also as the frankest and clearest statement of Professor Macintosh's present views on empirical theology and critical monism.

Among the specially meritorious features of this work are: the classification and criticism of intuition (6, 33, 186, where, following Montague, the author views intuitions as hypotheses); the exposition of mysticism, with rich and compact quotations, and a critical treatment of mysticism as "extreme realistic monism," in a manner reminding one of Royce's in the first volume of *The World and the Individual*, yet independent of it; the development of important distinctions between empirical, normative, and metaphysical theology; and the treatment in Chapter XIX of Reactionary Irrationalism, which, however, would have profited by reference to J. S. Bixler's recent *Religion for Free Minds*.

Any critical reader will find defects in so extensive a work as this, and the present reviewer is no exception. PRK is a purely epistemological work; and, while epistemology is necessary, it is far from sufficient. Especially in the field of religion, it is hard indeed to estimate epistemology apart from logic (theory of truth) on the one hand, and metaphysics (theory of reality) on the other. The result of a purely epistemological study of religion is highly abstract, almost artificial. Further, when the epistemology of the various writers discussed by Professor Macintosh is separated from the rest of their thought it becomes in each instance a mere torso, or (as Hegel would say) a labeled skeleton. One unfortunate result of this abstract procedure is the cavalier treatment of coherence as a criterion of truth. The author tells us that "coherence with our very limited and fragmentary experience" cannot "safely be taken as amounting to verifica-

tion in the scientific sense of the word" (187). This is lamentably inadequate as refutation of a view which must be refuted if critical monism is to be supported. If coherence is to be rejected because experience is fragmentary, the author fails to tell us what scientific verification critical monism has access to other than precisely that same "limited and fragmentary experience." Coherence is the maxim: consider all the fragments, all their relations, all rational hypotheses about them; whereas scientific verification and critical monism seem to the reviewer to be deliberately abstract and partial views. Professor Macintosh does not deal thoroughly with coherence. His only argument against it is an agnosticism which would undermine every view, including his own.

A minor defect in the book is an occasional lapse of style. Professor Macintosh can write: "A reaction in the direction of a reactionary irrationalism" (303). There is a disproportionate, but useful, emphasis on unpublished Yale dissertations. There is one very confusing typographical error. On p. 45, the heading of Part II appears as "Monistic Realism in Religion," where it should read "Monistic Idealism in Religion." Furthermore, the treatment of this topic neglects the very important type of idealistic monism in Royce's system which leads away from subjectivism to absolutism.

The four parts of PRK deal respectively with extreme monistic realism in religion (mysticism), monistic idealism (subjectivism and humanism), critical monistic realism (Professor Macintosh's own view) and dualistic realism (the views of St. Thomas, Kant, Schleiermacher, Troeltsch, Otto, pragmatists, and irrationalists).

The book as a whole is a wrestle between epistemological monism and epistemological dualism, which is indeed one of the most important issues in philosophy of religion, worthy of the attention devoted to it by Macintosh's able mind. Throughout the

book the standpoint of critical monism is maintained, which is well defined as the view that there is "partial identity or overlapping of the immediately experienced and the independently real" (6). This definition appears to mean that at least some of the states of my consciousness are at the same time also physical things or aspects of God, which are independently existent. Neither the arguments of Perry's analytic realism (which Macintosh rejects) nor Macintosh's own arguments have made this position seem plausible to the reviewer. Nor does Macintosh's attack on "dualistic realism" shake the reviewer's confidence in the superior validity of a dualistic epistemology, which rests on the proposition that "the independent reality is never the direct object of conscious experience" (4), as Macintosh defines it. It would be clearer had he said that the dualist denies that there is ever even a partial identity between a present conscious experience and its object, but this amended definition is consistent with all of the discussions in PRK.

To bring out the contrast sharply, let us say that for Professor Macintosh some of my experience is at least partially identical with some of God's independent reality; for the reviewer, none of my experience is ever identical with any part of God. I am I and God is God, however much we may interact or however well God may know me or I him.

It is impossible to give adequate reasons within the limits of a review for the rejection of Professor Macintosh's alternative, but at least a few points may be mentioned. His rejection of epistemological dualism is based on an inadequate consideration of the case for dualism. There is no use of A. O. Lovejoy's masterly work, *The Revolt against Dualism*, nor of J. B. Pratt's excellent *Personal Realism*, not to mention the reviewer's humble arguments in *An Introduction to Philosophy*. There is no critical treatment of the thesis that existence is never given,

which is common to thinkers so divergent as Hume, Kant, Santayana, and Bowne. Dualism is disposed of by the old argument that if the experience and the object are not identical then knowledge is impossible, and agnosticism is necessary (e. g., 185). All that one has a right to infer is that if numerical identity of idea and object is impossible, then the idea and the object are never identical. But perhaps knowledge consists in valid reference of idea to object, without their identity. Macintosh overlooks the fact that most of our knowledge must necessarily be dualistic in structure: that all reference to the past, the future, the absent, and the eternal implies validity where there cannot be even partial identity.

Back of the rejection of dualism is "the quest for certainty," the thirst for absolute identity with the object, with God. But if man cannot have absolute epistemological certainty (however absolute his practical commitment may be), if he cannot ever be ontologically identified with "that other which his ideas seek" (Royce), he will have to be satisfied with a rational faith, based on coherent hypotheses, tested by experience. What the reviewer calls well-grounded belief, and Dewey designates as warranted assertability (in the *Logic*), seems to be the nature of all knowledge. Knowledge is understanding; immediate experience is not knowledge, and (contrary to both Macintosh and Dewey) is not objective reality. Our experience represents the effects of reality on us, and from the clues of experience our rational faith reaches to society, the world, and God. The view of epistemological monism, even in its critical form, represents to the reviewer a yearning for the impossible. Macintosh complains that Troeltsch "fails to provide . . . for a full recovery of religious certitude" (291). But if proved certitude were possible, religion would be as universally accepted among thinkers as is science. A certain uneasiness in Macintosh's own mind is betrayed by his

plea, against the reviewer's dualism, to "lend a favorable ear to common sense" (377). But if the object is actually given (even in part) to inspection, why drag in the vague dogmas of common sense (which, by the way, is dualistic)? Again, the author's frank admission that empirical theology requires supplementation by metaphysics shows that there is something unsatisfactory about "immediate knowledge." If the historic Jesus is an accessible entity for critical monism (247), then monism has to refer as far beyond the present as dualism ever dreamed of doing.

The Problem of Religious Knowledge, therefore, probably does not solve the problem. The author demands too much certainty. He yearns too eagerly for absoluteness. But the book is so broad in scholarship and so stimulating that every careful reader will profit by serious study of its pages.

EDGAR SHEFFIELD BRIGHTMAN

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A Philosophy of the Christian Revelation.

By EDWIN LEWIS. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1940. 356 pages. \$3.00.

The general character of Professor Lewis' interpretation of Christianity has been set forth in his earlier publications and is well known to the readers of this Journal. In this, his latest book, there is no departure from the positions previously set forth but rather a clarification of his conception of the Christian religion and an *apologia* for the faith upon which it rests. The author believes deeply in the reality of the Supernatural. Christianity is, for him, a revealed religion. The validity of its claims does not rest upon rational argument. It is a matter of faith. People are free to accept or to reject the truths that are peculiar to it, but there is no way to prove or to disprove them. Once the truth of the Christian revelation has been accepted by an individ-

ual, it will be found adequate to give meaning and significance to the facts of science and to the moral experiences of human beings; but it is important for us to remember that this truth must be accepted before its real worth can be demonstrated. Augustine's *credo ut intelligam* is clearly endorsed by Professor Lewis.

The supreme and absolute revelation of God to men is said to be contained in the facts which Christians have long accepted with reference to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Following Brunner rather than Barth, Lewis insists that the revelation is not confined to the person of Jesus but is contained also in the structure of the physical world and in the experiences of human beings. "The God who reveals himself in Christ as Redeemer also reveals himself in Christ as Creator; wherefore, creation in its own way and kind is revelation" (p. 4). "If then, the world is a word of God comprising many lesser words, and this calls for a power somewhere of reading that word, and if that power is man, man himself becomes the most significant of all the divine word" (p. 14).

The revelation of God that is contained in the Old and the New Testaments is not to be identified with the literal meaning of the actual text of the Scriptures. The results of higher criticism are not to be set aside. They have brought to light many important truths concerning the origin and composition of the various books of the Bible. In particular they have shown that the human element as well as the divine was involved in the production of Biblical literature. But in spite of the fact that the Bible is not to be regarded as an infallible book, it does contain the true revelation of God. "The integrity of the revelation does not stand or fall by the wrappings" (p. 36). Just how one may be sure where the wrappings leave off and the true revelation begins is something that the author fails to make clear. He assumes, however, that once an individual has grasped the true revelation in so

far as it pertains to the person and work of Christ, he will come to accept those ideas about Christ that are consistent with "what may be called the general Christian mind." No definite statement is given about the exact contents of the general Christian mind but we are led to believe that it includes a belief in miracles and a supernatural explanation of certain events in the life of Jesus. More specifically, it includes belief in the doctrines of the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection. "The Virgin Birth and the Resurrection, we need to see, do not stand by themselves. They are parts, and let it be said at once, vital parts of the organism of Christian faith, or better the organism of Christian truth" (p. 184).

The acceptance of these doctrines on the part of the Christian is purely an act of faith. Arguments from the field of biology or any other natural or physical science are bound to be irrelevant. "Faith is never asked to consider the Birth of Christ as primarily a biological phenomenon. Instead, what is offered is offered as sheer miracle, something that never could be repeated because it was the act of God in pursuit and fulfillment of his age old purpose to appear among men and accomplish in their behalf that which only he could, and which could be accomplished only in this way" (p. 187). In regard to the doctrine of the Resurrection, Professor Lewis says, "We are asked to believe in it, not as a possibility in the order of nature, but as an impossibility in that order as constituted, and yet as an event which actually occurred and which could only occur because the subject of it was nature's Lord" (p. 189).

Christianity as interpreted by Professor H. N. Wieman is severely criticized. According to Lewis it is not Christianity at all inasmuch as it omits those elements of the Supernatural which constitute the essential genius of the Christian faith. He believes that the weaknesses of modern Protestant liberalism are being brought to light and there are evidences of a widespread

swing toward supernaturalism. The present interest in the writings of Søren Kierkegaard is a case in point. Further evidence can be found in the contemporary writings of men like Reinhold Niebuhr, W. A. Brown, John McKay, and more than a score of other theologians. The drift toward supernaturalism includes representatives of American and British Protestants, Anglo-Catholics, Neo-Thomists and others. The movement is indicative, in Professor Lewis' opinion, of the bankruptcy of all naturalistic interpretations of Christianity.

A Philosophy of the Christian Revelation is, in many respects, an outstanding publication. It is a clear statement of the supernaturalist's position regarding the essential character of the Christian religion. It contains a vigorous defense of Christian faith as over against the claims of modern science. It is to be regretted, however, that the author in presenting his own views finds it necessary to resort to dogmatism and even to intolerance towards those who do not agree with him. He is entitled to his own interpretation of Christianity but when he charges that it is the spirit of Anti-Christ that causes others to disagree with him he is going farther than the facts actually warrant.

CHARLES H. PATTERSON

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The Christian Fellowship. By NELS F. S. FERRE. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1940. xi + 221 pages. \$2.00.

The range of thought in this volume is suggested by the chapter headings: religious knowledge as a social act; the unity and continuity of the Christian faith; the basis of Christian fellowship; liberal thought and the religious absolute; the Kingdom of God and the Christian Church; symbolism and sacramental theory; Christianity and Karma; the Christian Fellowship as a social theory.

The author takes his point of departure from the failures of the ecumenical movements before the respective positions of liberalism, liberalism and sacramentarianism and attempts to work out a conception of Christian fellowship which is basic enough to be acceptable to all but also inclusive enough to include them all. The common ground is the Christian *agape*, the love of God for man and of man for man which is not limited or conditioned by the merit of its object. It is expressed in the parable of the prodigal son, in the injunctions to return good for evil and to love your enemies. Taken in this sense, *agape* is the unique contribution of Christianity to the world. The discussion is based on an exposition of Anders Nygren.

Agape is not a rational achievement but a revelation, in the sense of an emergence. Philosophy of religion is not enough; liberalism must be transcended. A social concept of knowledge and an organic philosophy provides a sympathetic interpretation of the sacraments so that they become means of grace to all Christians; so that it is in a sense justifiable to speak of our time as a post-Protestant period. The Protestants are not hopeless from the Catholic point of view but are looked upon as "separated brethren."

Christianity and Hinduism have much in common and can learn from one another. Karma corresponds to the western conception of natural order, but the Hindu theology holds that the ostensibly eternal nexus of cause and effect in Karma can be broken whenever man's own intention and desire to achieve release enter sufficiently into his act. Karma thus has room for grace to enter man's life from the suprakarmic realm. This is parallel to the Christian idea that the natural order remains subject to the transcendent will of God. So it should not be difficult for Hindus to accept the Christian God. The two religions have much to share with one another, but the ultimate

basis of fellowship is apparently to be Christianity rather than the reverse or in a new synthesis.

A comparison of Christianity with Fascism, Communism and Freudianism indicates the considerable amount of truth in each of the "isms" but shows how Christianity is superior to them all.

This is a book which grapples courageously with many of the most difficult problems of religion in our time; and it will be read with interest and profit by others who are trying to find their way through.

S. VERNON McCASLAND

University of Virginia

Man's Search for Himself. By EDWIN EWART AUBREY. Nashville: Cokesbury Press, 1940. 222 pages. \$1.75.

The chapters in this book by Professor Aubrey are the Cole lectures which he delivered at Vanderbilt University. In them, the author sets for himself the task of sketching a Christian doctrine of man and comes to the conclusion that this doctrine is the solution to the dilemma of the self and society. His discussion takes place upon the background of his wide knowledge in the fields of sociology and psychology, with many illuminating and thought-provoking insights into art, literature, philosophy and politics.

In times of crisis, man naturally begins to raise questions about himself. While in more settled periods he might take the self for granted, he now begins to inquire whether he can rely upon himself; whether he has any control over his destiny; whether God and Christianity have any meaning for him. All men find themselves to be essentially solitary. Each must live out his own individual pattern of life and while that pattern might cross or parallel for a time that of another, it is still unique. Yet, at the same time, man must also live in community, for without society there is no individ-

uality. Each has his own self-feeling, but as he tries to express this feeling he discovers that the "common symbols" which are the medium of social interchange are incapable of conveying what he means. At this point arises a dilemma which becomes most intense in crisis times. Self-consciousness is itself a result of this conflict. Further, as one realizes that his interpretation of others' self-feeling falls similarly short of full understanding, he becomes sceptical of ever being able to know his fellows.

Since community does play such a great part in the development of human personality, the *form* of community in which man lives is of the highest importance. Professor Aubrey suggests as his definition of the richest form of community that one "whose aim shows the longest time range, the widest scope, the deepest fulfillment of its participating individuals, and the greatest capacity for creative self-transformation in the determination of its ends." In fellowship with God "who is dynamic as an integrating force in the universe" and therefore as a "bond of souls" among men, there is achieved the integration of both individual and social life. And this achievement takes place in terms of the definition for the richest form of community.

It is generally assumed that integration is desirable, but for it to be satisfying it needs a focus of supreme value. In Christianity this focus is found in each individual's learning and doing the will of God. Obviously, to know the will of God is difficult, but in Jesus we have at least a clue. As higher and fuller integrations are achieved, religion is forced to destroy lower ones, hence its "perennial discontent."

Man tends toward sinfulness, largely because of wrong orientation and of being out of contact with the creative energies of the universe. Jesus best expresses the power by which the broken relationship between man and God can be restored. As salvation is found from his sin, man will come to live in new relationships with his fellows.

And since the view of life one accepts makes him what he becomes, the man who commits himself to Jesus' view of life is different from other men both in the self he becomes and in his functioning.

True fellowship and community with others results as each is loyal to the common source, God. This is the Kingdom of God, "rooted in primary reality"; the best of all communities, making for the most satisfying integration of life.

In regard to the churches, their contribution is to be the "true brotherhood of love," to "embody in their own life the Christian philosophy of community." If they do this, they can hold the world together. This may force them into radical activity at many points since their judgments on contemporary life must be based on the Christian faith as regards the foundation of Christian community and man's meaning in relation to what is ultimate in the world.

Finally, and positively, a credo is suggested under seven headings: 1. We live in a dynamic world. 2. Every life is a unique bottle-neck of time. 3. These unique beings are bound together and find their individual fullness only in fellowship. 4. This fellowship is not obtainable by rational communication. 5. Men ought therefore to love one another. 6. No better embodiment of love in a dynamic world is to be found than Jesus Christ. 7. The universe is one, and all its parts are continuous with one another.

As an exposition in modern terms of a Christian doctrine of man and as a solution to the dilemma it sets out to solve, this is a volume that will well repay careful reading and study. It is marked by wide knowledge and deep religious insight. Along with its contribution to our understanding of our religion, it provides a stimulating challenge to take that religion more seriously.

J. CALVIN KEENE

Colgate University

Experience, Reason and Faith: a survey in philosophy and religion. By EUGENE G. BEWKES AND OTHERS. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1940. xiv + 649 pages.

We are told in the Preface that this book grew out of many years of experience in teaching a survey course in philosophy and religion. The aim is not to give a history of these fields but to show the interconnection of philosophical and religious ideas in the development of western civilization and so present these as cultural forces. The materials are designed primarily for a course for younger students but the authors rightly believe that the volume will be useful for other students where background is needed.

After an introductory chapter on the mind and religion of early man a survey of the development of the Hebrew religion is given in Part I. Part II gives an account of the political-religious environment of the time of Jesus, Jesus' relation to contemporary problems, and the major teachings of Jesus. Part III gives a brief survey of both the philosophy and the religion of the Greeks, and this is continued in Part IV for the Graeco-Roman world. Part V contains a chapter on medieval theocracy and one on scholasticism. The transition to the modern world is given in Part VI. The modern period consists of chapters on the Enlightenment, Modern Idealism, the influence of Evolution, and of twentieth-century Science on philosophy and religion. The final chapter is concerned with reconstruction in philosophy and religion.

There is space only for two or three questions. Some will doubt whether young students can manage the materials provided here even when presented effectively as they are in this volume. The authors are certain, from their own experience, that this is possible. Whether others could get the same results can only be determined by

experimenting with it. For those who are interested in such a survey course this volume should be useful and may be recommended as a basic text.

The more important question has to do with the value of the survey course itself in comparison with other types. This problem involves judgments as to educational needs and methods, especially for young students, and cannot be discussed here. The reviewer does not believe that philosophy is best taught in a survey course. The beginning student, in particular, should do philosophy and not merely learn about it. Competence in philosophical analysis and reflection is more valuable than much knowledge. The study of religion may be a different problem, though it may be suggested that a thorough knowledge of a few classics in religious literature may be of greater value to young students than a survey of much material.

There will be no disagreement about the importance of integrating ideas, and this attempt in the field of philosophy and religion will interest and encourage many others.

R. F. SWIFT

Beloit College

Social Religion

Christianity and Power Politics. By REINHOLD NIEBUHR. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940. 226 pages. \$2.00.

This volume should be listed as "must reading" for Christian pacifists, secular isolationists, Marxian utopians, and Nazi—and other—nationalists. The sixteen essays which the book contains, some previously published, present a searching criticism of each of these positions, a criticism that should be read, understood, pondered, and met in terms of reason and sound logic rather than dogmatic prejudice. Unless Nie-

buhr's critical analysis of the assumptions underlying the various positions named, and his trenchant argument against the conclusions drawn from these assumptions can be adequately answered the advocates of such views must admit defeat or acknowledge that emotion and prejudice form the basis for their convictions.

Niebuhr writes in these essays, as in all his writing, in vivid, thought-provoking phrases. He has a remarkable gift of striking characterization: "synthetic barbarism," "dogmatic illusions," "the peace of tyranny," "a messianic class," "to save optimism not by hope but by faith," are samples of utterance that will long remain in the memory, becoming stimuli to more careful thinking, even by readers who feel that such terms are, at best, only partially true.

Niebuhr's argument is directed against every "dogmatic absolute" that identifies a given political program—the non-participation in conflict of pacifists, the utopianism of a Communist state, "the bourgeois idealism" of average, liberal Christian theology—with universal value and the Will of God. His argument is based on the Jewish-Christian "prophetic religion" which he has advocated in almost all of his writings; his theology is expressed in the concluding essays of the book, the two dealing with "Optimism, Pessimism and Faith" and final essay the address on "The Christian Church in a Secular Age" delivered before the Oxford Conference on Church and Community in 1937. Here one finds the theology and philosophy of tension which Niebuhr believes is the essence of the Christian Gospel and the basis for any "adequate religion,"—the tension that is the mystery of human life,—the tension between the outreach toward the transcendent God, creator and judge, and the sinfulness of man; the sins of pride and of lust for power that lead to tyranny and injustice in individual as well as in man's social life, sins that produce some measure of contradiction of the law of Christ "even in the most saintly life." It would be well for

the reader to begin with these chapters, for an understanding of the theological basis for the argument is necessary if one is to grasp the points made in the various particular aspects of modern life that are discussed.

Niebuhr seeks to formulate a realistic theology that recognizes the perils to meaning in human life and in the world and yet discovers the world to be meaningful because of God, the transcendent reference by which all the partial values and meanings are judged. It is through God and His grace that "evil is overcome even while it is recognized that evil is a part of the inevitable mystery of existence." In the conflict with evil every Christian must share, and cannot avoid participation in the political and economic conflicts of our day. In place of perfectionist pacifism or complacent isolationism the Christian is called to prophetic activism taking the side in every conflict that trends toward the working out more effectively of the Will of God. So tyranny must be fought against, even though the present-day opponents of tyranny are in themselves and in their policies also sinful, because tyranny denies the Will of God for a free and equal sonship in His household.

Many readers will feel that Niebuhr writes with undue vehemence against certain individuals, for example Richard Gregg's *The Power of Non-Violence*, and *The Christian Century*. He is certainly too fond of the adjective "vapid" as the characterization of the argument of those with whom he disagrees. A tone of greater respect for interpretations of the Christian way of life that differ from his own, but are sincerely held as "adequate" interpretations by many Christians, would enhance the value of the book. While both liberal Protestantism and modern culture may be criticized as in many respects "superficial religion" there is a certain contradiction of the very method Niebuhr follows when he assumes that his theology is basic for any "adequate religion." Moreover there should be some treatment of the pacifist argument

that "means determine ends" so that the use of a means as evil as war must affect the ends sought, namely the overthrow of tyranny. There should be also a discussion of the method Jesus followed in rejecting any political program against the tyranny of his day. But the moral and spiritual earnestness manifest throughout the essays is proof that Niebuhr does not merely discuss prophetic religion but is himself a true prophet for these times of moral confusion, one to whom the Lord Himself has spoken a much needed word.

LUCIUS C. PORTER

Yenching University, China

The Social Function of Religion. By E. O. JAMES. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1940. 312 pages. \$2.50.

Professor James brings to his study of the role of religion in culture a wealth of anthropological information and insight. His research in this field won him distinctions at Oxford and the University College, London. His ecclesiastical appointments, which have been many, led in 1933 to his becoming the first occupant of the Chair of the History of Philosophy of Religion at the University of Leeds and subsequently to being made head of the Department of Theology and the Examining Chaplain to the Bishop of Wakefield.

His conception of the unique function of religion is gathered up in this statement:

In a distracted age religion will achieve its purpose and function only if it is presented, not as an ethical system or aspiration, not as an intellectual proposition or pragmatic system, not even as an evangelical acceptance of Christ as Savior and King. In short, not as anything less than the *inbreaking on human history of God Incarnate* bringing to a world undone the gift of a new and endless life.¹

¹p. 507, the italics are mine.

²p. 2.

³His treatment of the role of rite and myth in religion is the most significant contribution of this book. See the review of this book by F. Ernest Johnson in *The Christian Century*.

To appreciate this conclusion adequately one must be aware of his two major assumptions. His entire thesis rests *first* upon his "minimum definition" of religion as "a belief in the existence of a transcendental reality giving rise to a system of super-causation expressed in rite and myth".²

Every system of values implies an "order of reality" which transcends our "experience." One of the functions of religion is to make this "order of reality" explicit and meaningful. The abstract generalizations of science and philosophy fail to achieve this end. If our insights into the nature of reality are to transform our way of life, if they are to become religious, they need to be expressed in the form of rite and myth. In the light of his review of the role of religion in culture it is apparent that all people tend to create their rites and myths.³ Thus it is not a question of whether or not we shall understand the ultimate order of reality in terms of myth; rather, the question is, What is that myth to be? or, What myth most adequately expresses our conception of the nature or Reality? James' answer to this question is his *second major assumption*; namely, that the revelation of God in the life, death and resurrection of Christ is the *true* interpretation of the "nature of Reality."

At this point he is very explicit. Take for instance his statement regarding the resurrection of Jesus.

Either our Lord was or He was not raised from the dead by an act of God in vindication of His claims to have conquered sin and death by His atoning self-offering.

Several other quotations might be selected to show how he has developed his second major assumption. This one, however, is sufficient to indicate his general point of view.

Granting the author's first assumption one may raise several questions regarding his second. Do not some of the limitations which the author so ably points out in his discussion of the rise of other cultural myths inhere in the "Christian Myth?" Is the

attempt, on the part of the first century Christians, to explain the messianic role of Jesus, an interpretation which is relevant to our world view today? Granting that it was necessary for the first century Christians to express the "Christian myth" in the language of Hellenistic Judaism, is it incumbent upon us to do the same? If Paul was living today would he think of man as being pre-existent? Would the Jewish sacrificial system be the most meaningful way of resolving the apparent conflict between justice and love in the world? Apart from the emphasis on the "resurrection" in an hellenistic world would Paul have developed his interpretation of the significance of Jesus in terms of this one event? Granting that these are hypothetical questions the issue really is, *Is it possible to unify and interpret our culture today in terms of the theological assumptions of the first century Christians?* One may go further and raise the question whether or not the "Christian Myth" developed by the first century Christians was not, at least in part, a distortion of Jesus' own conception of "the revelation of God in history."

What has all of this to do with the "social function of religion?" James' whole thesis is that it is the function of the Christian faith to furnish a *raison d'être* for social action and that this is found in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. As the result James has relatively little to say about the means for developing a Christian social order. He writes with rare spiritual insight about the general role of the Church in modern society but one misses any prophetic interpretation of the function of religion for these critical times such as the very significant statement recently made by the Archbishop of York.⁴

MILTON D. McLEAN

Macalester College

⁴*Time*, January 20, 1941, p. 61.

The Bektashi Order of Dervishes. By JOHN KINGSLEY BIRGE. 291 pp. London: Luzac and Company; Hartford: Hartford Seminary Press, 1937.

Mysticism and monasticism have performed a function in Islam which is not too well known to Western scholars. Among the most important in their influence on the Turkish masses is the Bektashi Order, which has been outlawed—with all other secret societies—in Turkey, but persists in Albania. It is "generally recognized by all students of Turkish culture today that all down through Ottoman history, when the orthodox religious life of the people was under dominant Arabic influence, when the classic literature in vogue in palace circles was Persian, and when even a great mystic order such as the *Mevlevis* based its belief and practice on a book written entirely in Persian, the Bektashis consistently held to the Turkish language and perpetuated in their belief and practice some at least of the pre-Islamic elements of Turkish culture. A Turkish investigator in 1926 . . . makes the claim that the Turkish national ideal never was able to find its expression in the Arab internationalism, but did find it in the . . . lodge rooms of . . . the Bektashis and village groups related to them. . . . In the secret practices of these religious groups alone was 'national freedom' to be found."

While numerous sound references to the Order are found in the literature on Muslim and Ottoman institutions, Dr. Birge gives us here the first thorough description and analysis of the history, doctrines, and influence of the Bektashis. With an initiated membership which may correspond roughly to the ratio of monks among laymen in medieval Europe, their associate membership, so to speak, embraced a large portion of the population who responded to their ideals of Turkification, and equality of the sexes, while outwardly remaining

loyal to orthodox Islâm. Hence it is no mere rationalization for members to say that they are not distressed by the abolition of their Order, since its aims regarding the promotion of a social movement have been accomplished by the program of the Republic of Turkey's Reformation.

Dr. Birge, since 1914 a missionary of the American Board in Turkey and one of its first appointees to learn Turkish, has delved deep into Turkish, Arabic and Persian sources; he has consulted innumerable authorities, high and humble; he has also visited monasteries and members in Albania, since 1925 the seat of Bektashiism. He has left unexamined no (grave-) stone or (manuscript-) leaf which might enrich his knowledge. What is dubious he has checked. He has confined his conclusions to demonstrable fact, leaving the reviewer to wish he had allowed himself more scope in commenting on the influence of the Order on the Turkish Reformation. As a result, he is to be recognized among Westerners as the preëminent authority in this field, a prestige prevailing also in Turkey.

This is a *must* book for all students of mysticism, monasticism, Islâm, and Turkish social movements.

DONALD E. WEBSTER

Beloit College

A World Faith

Living Religions and A World Faith. By WILLIAM E. HOCKING. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1940. 291 pages. \$2.50.

Thoughtful observers of the present world scene witnessing the constant interweaving of cultural patterns into what seems to point at least in the direction of a world culture, will often have asked themselves, "What about religion in relation to the new world culture?"

There was a time, of course, when a complacent so-called Christian world looked for-

ward to the supplanting of all other faiths by Christianity, but that no longer seems quite so surely to be the outcome of this cultural interpenetration. To be sure, Christianity has won considerable numbers as adherents among most of the peoples of the world, but there is no immediate indication of a breakdown of the other religions and a quiet acceptance of Christianity by their adherents. On the other hand some of the religions have in recent years taken on new life and energy and have begun not only to strike back within their own lands, but have invaded Christian lands with their own faith and surprisingly enough, have found some ready to listen and to accept their teaching. Furthermore, Christianity in contact with other religions and cultures displays a tendency not only to give but take, so that there begin already to appear significant trends within Christianity in certain parts of the world which greatly disturb orthodox Christians.

One hears the suggestion that out of this all may come a *world faith*. There was definite need, therefore, that some competent scholar and observer of what is taking place in this area should address himself to a sober discussion of the question. This Professor Hocking of Harvard did in his Hibbert lectures in 1939. Certainly no more appropriate choice could have been made from among present-day scholars to discuss such a theme, for the author has, first of all, the philosophic background needed for such a task; he is a profoundly religious person himself and well grounded in his own understanding of Christianity; and, in addition, he has traveled widely and studied at first-hand most of the present-day living faiths. Such a preparation leads one to anticipate a significant treatment of the subject, which is found to be more than warranted on reading the book.

Starting with a discussion of the basic nature of religion, the author points out some of the distinctive features of each of the Oriental religions. He then turns to a

discussion of possible ways to a world faith—namely, the way of radical displacement, the way of synthesis, and the way of reconception. As might be expected, he repudiates the first, regards the second as inevitable but inadequate, leaving reconception as the probable way through which a world faith may emerge. What he means by reconception is suggested rather than wholly explained in the following brief statement: "When the several great systems of faith are brought as now into intimate contact, there is a new era of broadening in which each religion extends its base to comprise what it finds valid in other strands of tradition. But this also must serve as preliminary to that deepening which is a search for a better grasp of its own essence. . . . We require to understand our own religion better—we must *reconceive* it—then we shall see how the new perspectives belong quite naturally to what has always been present in its nature, unnoticed or unappreciated by us."

In the final lecture of the series, Professor Hocking discusses the emerging elements of a world faith, then turns to a consideration of the role of Christianity in the process. Not a little insight into the nature of Christianity and of other religions is afforded in this discussion. One rises from the reading of it, if not in complete agreement with the author in his conclusions, nevertheless stimulated to a rethinking of the whole problem and grateful for the suggestiveness both of the information afforded and the fine spirit in which the whole inquiry was carried forward.

This book seems to me to be a "must" book for every college library which considers the history of religion and missions, or indeed any college that makes a serious attempt at an understanding of religion. And, of course, all teachers of religion and administrators of missionary enterprises would be gratefully benefited by owning the volume.

CHARLES S. BRADEN

Northwestern University

Can Christianity Save Civilization? By WALTER MARSHALL HORTON. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1940. 271 pages. \$2.00.

Both secular and religious thinkers are attacking the problem of how to achieve synthesis in the modern world of conflict and disintegration. W. H. Auden, in the *Atlantic*, states the problem in the following words:

To set in order—that's the task
Both Eros and Apollo ask;
For Art and Life agree in this
That each intends a synthesis,
That order which must be the end
That all self-loving things intend
Who struggle for their liberty,
Who see, that is, their will to be.

Current religious books grappling with the problem include W. E. Hocking's *Living Religions and a World Faith*, reviewed by Charles S. Braden elsewhere in this same issue of the JBR, and Horton's book.

Can Christianity save civilization? Professor Walter M. Horton is hopeful that it can, but safeguards himself against the charge of superficial optimism by a careful definition of terms. When he speaks of saving civilization, he does not mean preserving it as it is nor restoring it as it was. When he refers to Christianity, he is thinking in terms of "Christianity-as-it-potentially-is, Christianity-as-it-may-become" (p. 9).

The basic argument of the entire book has to do with the relationship between religion and culture. Is religion a creative cultural force? Or is it "the opium of the people?" Or has the relationship between religion and culture varied in different periods? Horton does not claim that religion has always been a creative force, but argues that it has sometimes been and may again become a vitalizing influence in culture. It is his thesis "that religion has not permanently lost its cultural creativity; that the recent cultural sterility of Western religion and the recent secularization of Western society do but evidence that a particular outburst of religious creativity, on which we

had been living for some centuries, has now spent its force; that our civilization can and must experience religious rebirth, which alone can inaugurate a new ascending phase of the culture cycle and save what is salvageable in our existing institutions" (p. 19).

In a very interesting passage Horton makes a critical comparison of Spengler's biological determinism with Schweitzer's view that the decline of civilization is due "not to any inevitable process of senescence, but rather (to) the undermining and collapse of the ethical basis of Western civilization" (p. 168). The Christian tradition has the ethical and religious resources to make possible a re-integration of culture, this time not merely a unified western, but rather a world civilization.

The least satisfying portion of the book deals with the relation of Christianity to the other living religions of the world. Perhaps Professor Horton will clarify his views on this question in a later volume. He seems to adopt what Hocking describes as the theory of "radical displacement" of other religions by Christianity. Such a sentence as the following smacks of religious imperialism: "the religion which once mastered the Graeco-Roman culture of the West can master the Indo-Chinese culture of the East" (p. 158). From this view of the way in which a world faith is to be achieved many Christians, not to mention Hindus and Buddhists, will dissent. Professor Hocking's treatment of the same problem is more convincing.

Professor Braden states that Hocking's book is a "must" book. The present reviewer is inclined to think that both Horton and Hocking have written *must* books, and that the two books need to be read together.

CARL E. PURINTON

Beloit College

Method in the Study of Syncretism

(Concluded from Page 34)

traditional deities, Bel, Aglibol and Jahribol, Zeus Kyrios, Hadad and Atargatis, Mithras, Yahwe and Jesus Christ. Only one room shows the slightest traces of the influence even of Gnosticism. We should do well, then, in constructing hypotheses concerning the development of Biblical religion to take cognizance of the hard, simple facts of popular religion in the areas with which we deal wherever they are available.

Finally, Reitzenstein's hypothesis in laying down the pattern for a development that spanned centuries of history, took no cognizance of the momentous events of political and national life that transpired in the period in question. He made no attempt to assay the influence of cultural and religious and racial barriers, the influence of the tensions between Rome and Parthia, the influence of local preoccupations and of conflicting movements. Perhaps only a few of them are actually relevant, but it is not safe to write the history of a religious development in so complicated a period of ancient life without endeavoring to co-ordinate it with the known facts of political and cultural history generally.

These, then, are the methodological observations which I find it possible to make at the moment. They should be regarded as exploratory and suggestive rather than normative, but if they serve to make us more cautious and objective as we go about our work of interpreting the development of Biblical religion as seen in the light of contemporary life and thought, they will have accomplished their purpose.

Winner of the \$15,000 Bross Award

Christianity

An Inquiry into its Nature and Truth

by Harris Franklin Rall

"One of the most remarkable books in the theological field with which I am acquainted."
—Bishop F. J. McConnell, Methodist Church.

"Ripe scholarship in many fields of knowledge and a wisdom from long reflection enter into the making of the volume. . . . The Christian religion is studied from every important angle, and the diverse threads of argument are carefully woven into a fabric of thought which is strong and whole."—*Religious Book Club Bulletin*.

"Every one who wishes to know what religion can say to an educated person ought to read this book. It is written in clear and persuasive style, presenting the Christian religion in a reasonable light and showing its relation to science, philosophy and world affairs. It is remarkably free from technicalities and academic mannerisms. It well deserves the high recognition it has received."—Edgar S. Brightman, Boston University.

A Religious Book Club Selection. \$2.50

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

NEW YORK

New Testament Religion

(Continued from Page 22)

whether there was relationship as well as similarity—untouched. One accumulates the materials from which desired bridges between the East and the West can be constructed. The actual religious life of that amazing transition can thus actually be observed.

NOTES

1. This statement is deliberately objective; it does not imply any position with reference to alleged Aramaic originals or sources.
2. It does not follow that these phenomena prove that Paul had studied for the rabbinate. See

Enslin, "Paul and Gamaliel," *Journal of Religion*, 7 (1927): 360-75.

3. The best known example is the Strack-Billerbeck *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrash* (5 volumes, München, 1922-28).
4. *An Introduction to Philo Judaeus* (New Haven, 1940), p. ix.
5. See Riddle, *Early Christian Life* (Chicago, 1936).
6. Reitzenstein, *Hellenistische Wundererzählungen* (München, 1906).
7. Weinrich, *Antike Heilungswunder* (Geissen, 1909).
8. Colwell, *John Defends the Gospel* (Chicago, 1936).
9. Especially *By Light, Light; the Mystical Gospel of Hellenistic Judaism* (New Haven, 1937).
10. Chicago, 1923.

The Association

THE ANNUAL MEETING

The thirty-first annual meeting of the National Association of Biblical Instructors opened at 10 A. M., December 27, 1940, in Room 205, Union Theological Seminary. The meeting was called to order by President Branscomb.

The treasurer's report was given by Professor Mould, and copies of it were distributed. He stated that since second class mailing privileges had been obtained for the Journal, only \$18 was spent on that this year in place of \$78 two years ago. The large balance of \$498.53 was partly due to the fact that the Somerset Press had not yet sent the bill for the November issue of the Journal; also the \$100 deposit for the permanent bank balance, as voted last year, is included. Other items in Accounts Payable did not reach the Treasurer till after the closing of the books on December 27. However our financial condition is satisfactory and good.

The President appointed Professor William Scott and Professor H. C. Myers as auditing committee to examine the books.

The report of the Recording Secretary on membership is included at the end of the Treasurer's Report. Professor Mould called attention to the fact that while the number of new members and those restored from the suspended roll during 1940 amounted to 69, 67 had been dropped. A great deal of work went into getting the 69; we had to keep moving in order to stay where we are. The same problem is likely to exist next year, as 51 are now in arrears for 1940.

The President announced the action of the Executive Council that the dues of Canadian members should be waived during present conditions, as we do not wish to lose this little group of members.

The report of the Editor of the Journal was given by Professor Purinton, who first expressed appreciation of the work of the Treasurer. With publication of the November issue, the present editor and board have completed three years of service. The shift of the editorial office from the eastern sea-board to the interior might be regarded as part of the larger movement to safeguard vital industries! There has been difficulty in getting books reviewed within a reasonable time; reviewers are requested to submit their reviews within three or four weeks. More volunteers for reviewing are welcome; it is suggested that

they send in their names and fields of interest on 3x5 cards. It has hitherto been the policy to divide the space in each issue equally between articles and reviews. More undergraduate contributions are welcome.

Professor Purinton expressed willingness to transmit the greetings of this meeting to the meeting of the Mid-Western Branch, to be held in Chicago February 10-11. It was so moved and carried.

Professor Andrews stated that the Committee on the name of the Association and the Journal would meet at lunch and report later. Professor Purinton spoke of correspondence received on this subject, and remarked that there are other groups springing up which should be affiliated with us but will not under the present name.

Professor Newman reported that the Committee on Revision of the Course of Study for Secondary Schools had carried out the assignment given last December. First they secured the names of all who had purchased the last edition and wrote to them asking for suggestions for the revision. Close contact has been kept with the Committee of the International Council on Religious Education. The outline has been revised several times. Free copies of the revision were to be sent out with the November issue of the Journal, but were omitted by mistake. Copies will go out with the February issue.

Professor Grimshaw reported for the Committee on Vacancies and Appointments, which he remarked had moved in the opposite direction to the Journal, from unprotected Lake Erie to the shadow of the arsenal at Springfield, Mass. Twenty-four have been enrolled with the committee; the list was sent to 300 college deans and presidents. Four have found positions, one directly through the committee. Again it must be said that the success of the committee depends on cooperation of the members of the Association, in notifying the chairman of impending vacancies or of positions obtained.

There was no report on Objective Tests by Professor King, as he was unable to be present.

The President reported that the Seminary regretted its inability to keep the Refectory open during our meetings, but John Jay Hall welcomes members for all meals.

The President's Address followed.

The Saturday morning session, Dec. 28, closed with the second business meeting.

Professor Andrews reported for the Committee on the name of the Association, that progress had been made but no conclusions reached. There is a considerable measure of dissatisfaction with the present name; it is agreed that our main field of interest is on the college level, but we do not wish to exclude preparatory school teachers and ministers. Synthesis with other interests than the Bible is evident, and increase of scholarly interest. We should be a synthesizing medium in a complex field.

The motion was made and carried to accept this report and continue the committee.

Professor Pfeiffer suggested the possibility of a symposium next year, growing out of the papers of the morning, on the question "Should the historical and the philosophical approaches to religion be combined or kept separate?"

The auditing committee reported that they had examined the Treasurer's books and found "meticulous care and absolute accuracy."

Professor Mould presented the budget for 1941, based on the assumption that the income next year would be equivalent to the income this year.

BUDGET FOR 1941

Printing and distributing Journal.	\$1,200.00
Editor's Expenses	200.00
Treasurer's Expenses	100.00
Annual Meeting	30.00
Miscellaneous General Expense..	25.00
Promotion	50.00
Mid-western Branch	45.00
	<hr/> \$1,650.00
Balance reported at this annual meeting to be assigned:	
Permanent bank deposit.....	\$100.00
For payment of accounts due for 1940	398.53
	<hr/> \$498.53

This budget was accepted.

Professor Curtis reported for the Nominating Committee the following list of officers for next year.

President: Mrs. Katharine H. Paton, Baldwin School, Bryn Mawr, Pa.
 Vice-President: Professor Philip Hyatt, Wellesley College.
 Treasurer: Professor Elmer K. Mould, Elmira College.
 Recording Secretary: Dr. Erminie Huntress, Pendle Hill.

Corresponding Secretary: Miss Narola Rivenburg, Baptist Institute, Philadelphia.

Associates in Council:

Dean Lankard, Brothers College, 1941.

Professor Muriel S. Curtis, Wellesley College, 1941-42.

Professor Floyd Filson, Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

Chairman of the Program Committee:

Professor Charles C. Craig, Oberlin Graduate School of Theology.

These officers were accepted.

Professor Purinton suggested that the Chairman of the Program Committee work with Professor Flight, associate editor and liaison officer between the two Societies.

Motions were made and carried to express gratitude to Union Theological Seminary, the Chairman of the Program Committee, and the Editor of the Journal. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

ERMINIE HUNTRESS,
Recording Secretary.

Treasurer's Report for the Year 1940

RECEIPTS

Balance reported at annual meeting, 26 December 1939	\$159.76
Dues: Arrears for 1939	59.00
Current for 1940*	310.15
Advance for 1941*	13.59
Subscriptions to Journal of Bible and Religion:	
Current for 1940	1,024.95
Advance for 1941	81.00
Advertising in Journal of Bible and Religion	105.50
Sale of literature	60.96
Miscellaneous commissions on JBR subscriptions	4.35
	<hr/> \$1,819.17

DISBURSEMENTS

Printing and distributing Journal of Bible and Religion.....	834.08
Editors' expenses, Journal of Bible and Religion	137.00
Treasurer's expenses	62.88
Annual meeting	9.56
Promotion	68.00
Midwestern Branch	50.05

Miscellaneous general expense	\$23.28	
December 1939 poll of members	25.79	
Printing Units of Study	110.00	
		159.07
Balance in Elmira Bank and Trust Co.	498.53	
		<u>\$1,819.17</u>

ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

On deposit, Post Office, Somerville, N. J.	\$6.90
Columbia University Press, advertising, JBR viii/4.....	25.00

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

The Masters School, credit memorandum a/c overcharge	\$3.75
The Howell Press, programs for annual meeting	9.00
The Howell Press, reply cards for treasurer	4.50
Somerset Press, for Journal of Bible and Religion viii/4	

*Each member's annual dues credited 75c as dues, \$2.25 as subscription to JBR.

MEMBERSHIP

Members paid for 1941	24
Members paid for 1940	413
Members in arrears for 1940.....	51
Honorary members	1
New members enrolled and paid during 1940	66
Restored from suspended roll during 1940	3
Members dropped during 1940	
By reason of death	1
At their own request, various reasons	39
For non-payment of dues for 1939..	27
Libraries and institutions paid for 1941 (JBR)	14
Libraries and institutions paid for 1940 (JBR)	34

MEMBERS DECEASED

Prof. Eliza H. Kendrick, Wellesley College, Wellesley, Mass.

Are You Now Unemployed or Seeking to re-Locate ?

If so you will do well to communicate with the chairman of the Committee on Vacancies: Ivan G. Grimshaw, 2757 Fairmount Boulevard, Cleveland Heights, Ohio.

Again this year this committee is planning to send to all the presidents of colleges having departments of Bible and Religion a list of the people enrolled with the committee giving a brief statement of their qualifications. (No actual names will appear; numbers being used). In case of a vacancy those qualified will be informed immediately.

A note to Dr. Grimshaw will bring you a registration blank by return mail, and insure inclusion of your record. Those enrolled for 1939 may enroll for 1940 by merely forwarding 25c in stamps to Dr. Grimshaw and indicating any additions to be made to their 1939 registration blank. All those enrolled for 1940 will appear in the Personnel Exchange column in the next issue of the JOURNAL.

Members of the Association

A.

- Mr. John Vincent Abbott, P. O. Box 3, Watertown, Conn.
 Prof. David E. Adams, B. D., D. D., (Mount Holyoke College), Box 42, South Hadley, Mass.
 Dean Carl Agee, B. D., D. D., Bible College of Missouri, Columbia, Mo.
 Miss Grace Aitchison, A. M., Starkweather Hall, M. S. N. S., Ypsilanti, Mich.
 Prof. William F. Albright, Ph. D., Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Md.
 Prof. Sylvia E. Aldrich, 815 Belden Avenue, Chicago, Ill.
 Prof. Henry E. Allen, Ph. D., (Lafayette College), 159 Shawnee Ave., Easton, Pa.
 Dean Leroy Allen, A. M., D. Soc. Sc., Southwestern College, Winfield, Kan.
 Prof. May A. Allen, Ph. D., Newcomb College, New Orleans, La.
 Prof. John L. Anderson, College of Idaho, Caldwell, Ida.
 Prof. Mary E. Andrews, Ph. D., Goucher College, Baltimore, Md.
 Dr. Eugene S. Ashton, Th. D., Goucher College, Baltimore, Md.
 Prof. A. L. Aulick, Th. D., (Oklahoma Baptist University), 1424 North Park, Shawnee, Okla.
 Prof. William Goodwin Aurelio, Boston University, Brookline, Mass.
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